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MINORITY NEWSPAPER AND EDITORIAL CARTOONS:  
READING TURKISH-JEWISH MINORITY THROUGH ŞALOM  
NEWSPAPER IN TURKEY

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Minority Newspaper and Editorial Cartoons: Reading Turkish Jewish  
Minority Through Şalom Newspaper in Turkey

Azınlık Gazetesi ve Editöryel Karikatür: Türk-Yahudi Toplumunu Şalom  
Gazetesi Üzerinden Okumak

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research draws from Şalom, the longest-published Turkish-Jewish newspaper since 1947, to trace the communication strategies of Şalom as a form of minority media. It offers a multilayered analysis of the newspaper's front pages and İzel Rozental's editorial cartoon corner, "Tünelin Ucu"(End of the Tunnel). The content and historical discourse analysis of the selected number of front pages shed light on various intervention and communication strategies used by Şalom during four marking periods in the history of the Turkish-Jewish minority. It is argued that while the content and the tone of the news on the front pages are mediated by the political and social context, the editorial cartoons of "Tünelin Ucu" constitute a significant space to claim oppositional position through the critique of local and international politics. Thus, the editorial cartoons form a dialogic relationship with the front-page news of minority media create different channels and unique politics of representation. Editorial cartoons carry the potential of turning minority newspaper into an active agent questioning the status quo and paving the way to put forward the criticism.

**Keywords:** Editorial Cartoon, Minority newspaper, Şalom, Turkish-Jewish minority, Tünelin Ucu

## ÖZET

Bu araştırma, 1947'den beri, en uzun süre yayınlanan Türk-Yahudi gazetesi Şalom'un iletişim stratejilerinin izlerini sürüyor. Araştırma gazetenin kapak sayfalarının ve İzel Rozental'in karikatür köşesi "Tünelin Ucu"nun çok katmanlı bir analizini sunuyor. Seçilen sayılardaki kapak sayfaların içerik ve tarihsel söylem analizi, Şalom'un Türk-Yahudi azınlığın tarihindeki dört farklı döneminde kullandığı çeşitli iletişim stratejilerine ışık tutuyor. "Tünelin Ucu"nun editoryel karikatürlerinin yerel ve uluslararası siyaset eleştirisi yoluyla kapak sayfalarda yer alan haberlerin içeriği ve üslubuna, muhalif konum oluşturduğu savunulmaktadır. Böylece editoryel karikatürler, azınlık medyasının kapak sayfa haberleriyle diyalojik bir ilişki kuruyor, farklı mecralar ve özgün temsil politikaları yaratıyor. Araştırma, editoryel karikatürler yoluyla azınlık gazetesinin, statükoyu sorgulayan ve eleştirinin önünü açan aktif bir ajan haline getirme sürecine ışık tutmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Editoryal Karikatür, Azınlık Gazetesi, Şalom, Türk- Yahudi Azınlığı, Tünelin Ucu

## INTRODUCTION

Despite its significant presence and contribution to the development of the press in Turkey, the minority media had limited coverage in the literature. Minority media has been marginalized and largely excluded from the history of the Turkish press, sharing a destiny similar to that of minority groups (Kaya and Çağlar, 2015). Extensive lack of knowledge exists on the history and politics of minority newspapers in Turkey, including essential data, such as when and how various minority newspapers were established, how they evolved, and when and why they were closed. While the formation of collective memory is essential, particularly for ethnic groups, the literature on the history of the journalism and media in Turkey remained insignificant in the inclusion of the minority media and communication (Dönmez, 2008). As of today in 2022, minority media in Turkey has far less variety compared to the times of the Ottoman Empire and the first decades of the Turkish Republic, mainly due to various political and financial reasons. With the decrease in minority populations in the country, the circulation of minority newspapers has also dramatically decreased. As of 2022, Şalom is the one and only newspaper that has survived as long as Turkish-Jewish minority is concerned.

The concept of "minority" in its simplest form refers to a group of people or a community, defined by ethnicity, culture, language, religion, race, sexual orientation, or other characteristics, whose members are exceeded by the majority of a given society (Ritzer, 2016) The concept does not only refer to the difference in numbers but also refers to the distinction and conflict between disadvantaged and dominant groups. Minority media often constitute a space for minorities to represent themselves, define their identities and creatively voice their needs and interests and often used interchangeably or as synonymous with ethnic media (Gülner, 2011; Aydoğan and Kırık, 2012; Hayır, 2017). For this study, minority and ethnic media are used synonymously as they both carry similar characteristics with their defined functions to

share news and information from communities or as a space of resistance against assimilation by ensuring the transmission of religious, cultural, and social norms and values to future generations.

The newspaper *Şalom*, the focus of this research, can be categorized as minority media due to its representation of the Jewish minority in Turkey. *Şalom* is a weekly newspaper of the Turkish-Jewish community that started its publication life in 1947. Avram Leyon founded the newspaper, initially published in Ladino (Judeo-Spanish spoken by Sephardic Jews) and, until 1960, was published periodically with only a few pages. The beginning of Jewish minority media goes back centuries to the first printing activities in the Ottoman Empire, which were started by the Sephardic Jews who migrated from Spain in 1492 (Simon, 2011). Jews in Turkey published 86 newspapers during the Ottoman period, and 16 newspapers after the Republic was established in 1923 (Durul, 2019). Today in 2022, the most widespread Turkish-Jewish newspaper in Turkey is *Şalom*, with a weekly circulation of around 4000 (Günaydın, 2019). Compared to other publications within the Turkish-Jewish minority, *Şalom* has been the only newspaper with the most extended uninterrupted publication. As argued by Yanardağoglu (2013) *Şalom* as the newspaper of Turkish-Jewish minority since 1947, is perceived as a reflector and the leader of public opinion in the community. In analyzing *Şalom*, Yanardaoğlu makes a point about the newspaper refraining from challenging the status quo and, at times, combating prejudices against Jews.

Drawing from *Şalom*, this research addresses the communication strategies developed within a minority media space in response to changing international political and cultural, social, and political context of Turkey. Nevertheless, the dissertation is not a political study and does not include the conflict between Israel and Palestine. On the contrary, peace is considered with a particular focus on the social and cultural dialogue. Based on the analysis of the front-page news and “Tünelin Ucu”, the editorial cartoon section by İzel Rozental, I trace the positionality of *Şalom* during the significant events in the history of the Turkish-Jewish minority through its content and

communication strategies. To make inferences about Rozental's work, I pay particular attention to how the editorial cartoon functions as a space of continuous critique across various periods. In this regard, editorial cartoons carry complex messages with images, symbols, and metaphors that convey cultural values, beliefs, and norms through connotation, repetition, transformation, comparison, similarity, absurdity, and acknowledgement of identity. As discussed in the literature, the editorial cartoons might constitute spaces of opposition and resistance for those who had been historically silenced. They are also spaces of reflection on and interpretation of the political, social, cultural, economic, philosophical, and psychological issues. Thus, I argue that editorial cartoons by İzel Rozental in "Tünelin Ucu" create a space for expressing the multilayered and complex dimensions of minority identities and resistances concerning national and international issues.

The presence of Jews in Anatolia dates back centuries, but the migration of Jews from Spain in 1492 during the Ottoman period is considered a historical turning point. Ninety-thousand of the two hundred thousand Jews who were expelled from Spain appealed to Sultan Bayezid II, and the Ottoman Empire welcomed them (Güleryüz, 2009). The Jewish population was historically a tiny minority in the Ottoman Empire compared to the larger Christian population and as Neyzi (2005) argued, during the sixteenth century, Ottoman Jews were at the height of their commercial success. With the increase of European trade in the seventeenth century, Christians started replacing Jews in commercial life. As a result of the Ottoman reform movement emerging from the eighteenth century to serve Ottoman Empire, it was declared that all Ottoman subjects, regardless of religion, had equal rights and duties. In the mid-nineteenth century, many Ottomans Jews benefited from the introduction of the modern educational system in Europe. As Neyzi (2005) discussed, with the entry of Ottoman Jews into state and alliance schools, a Jewish bourgeoisie gradually emerged with the alliance schools ensuring modernist discourse as the dominant discourse of

Ottoman/Turkish Jews. Neyzi (2005) comments on this situation as the Jewish bourgeoisie collaborating with the Young Turks and later with the Kemalists.

With the end of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, the Turkish-Jewish minority continued to live in Turkey as citizens. As argued in various literature, in recognition of the citizenship, the minority rights and privileges were granted by Article 42 of the Lausanne Treaty on September 15, 1925, by special family law and personal provisions (Bali, 2001; Kirisci, 2000; Kuyucu, 2005). Thus, Jewish people were legally recognized as a minority group along with Armenians and Greeks, but the Jewish minority was considered the smallest of the three (Toktas, 2005). In some discussions, this was perceived as a reflection of the ideology of the new Republic to maintain its power without any ethnic and class differences (Bora, 1996; Parla, 1991). However, non-Muslims refused these attempts through the 42nd clause of the Lausanne Treaty, which provided minorities familial and personal autonomy (Kuyucu, 2005). Jews did not want to be seen as a minority and take advantage of these rights; they decided that these privileges would conflict with the fairness of the Turkish state and refused the minority status (Bali, 2010). Despite Kemalist secularism regulated reservations over religious teaching and imposed higher taxation, the Jewish minority of the country maintained their identities during the 30's and 40's (Haritos, 2013). While other Jewish communities in Europe suffered the results of the Holocaust that took place between 1939 – 1945, the liberal policy towards the Jewish population, as well as Ankara's neutrality during World War II, turned Turkey into a 'haven' for Jews (Haritos, 2013).

Following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, a significant percentage of Turkish Jews emigrated to Israel. According to the World Jewish Congress and the Turkish-Jewish Community official figures, between 1948 and 1951 37,000 out of a total of 75,000 Jews emigrated to Israel ("Big Turkish Aliya"). Since 1948, a total of 61,221 Turkish Jews emigrated to Israel, with a population of 15,000 Jews in 2022 living in the country. The majority of the community reside in İstanbul,

with fewer in other Turkish cities such as İzmir, Ankara, Bursa, Adana, Kırklareli, İskenderun and a tiny Arab-speaking Jewish community of 10 families in Antakya (Haritos, 2013). In 2022, 96% of the community comprised Sepharadim, with Ashkenazim accounting for the rest. Jews are legally represented by the Hahambasi, the Chief Rabbi: Itshak Haleva who is supported by a religious Council made up of five Hahamim. Sixty-five Lay Counsellors take care of the secular affairs of the minority, and an Executive Committee of fourteen handles the daily matters. Turkish-Jewish minority maintains in Istanbul a school complex including elementary and secondary schools for around 700 students: Ulus Musevi Lisesi. Turkish is the language of education, with 3 to 5 hours weekly of English and Hebrew as secondary languages. While younger Jews speak Turkish as their native language, the over-70-year-old generation is more at home speaking in French or Judeo-Spanish (Ladino).

Despite AKP's political incentives, aiming to promote a neo-Islamist social agenda and restructuring the country's regional foreign policy priorities, in an encouraging move made in the early 2010s by the Turkish administration, a public discussion about the new Constitution has started within the framework of which the government showed that religious diversity might be a factor of social reconciliation rather than a tool of foreign policy adversity. (Haritos, 2013) In late 2011 the Jewish minority, the Greek Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Armenian and the Syriac Orthodox Churches — as well as the Alevi Community — have all been invited to convey their remarks and suggestions to the Constitutional Reconciliation Commission (AUK), which is entitled to form the draft of the new Turkish Constitution, aiming to regulate minority rights. However, these attempts did not continue an effort to transform cultural and political environment.

Non-Muslim minorities in Turkey have often faced problems stemming from domestic and international conflicts and from prejudices in the public sphere resulting from historical tensions (Yanardağoğlu, 2013). As Yanardağoğlu (2013) further elaborates, although the general distance within non-Muslim communities has

remained silent, one could observe an openness in these communities and a revitalization of their media. She further argues that the process has intensified since the 1990s as a result of greater visibility of identity politics in the public realm. The current position and quality of minority media in a country indicate state and societal attitudes toward minority groups.

A conscious effort exists to preserve the heritage of Judeo-Spanish. (Güteryüz 2000) A comparative analysis of the use of minority languages in minorities' newspapers, starting with Şalom, reveals that, as of today in 2022, Ladino language use has become less frequent. (Levi, 2007). Jews have been speaking Ladino since the 15th century in Spain, formerly known as Iberia, yet younger generations do not use the language, neither are they motivated to learn. In 2022, Şalom established a website that includes English summaries of its print content in addition to the digital version of its full-length Turkish content; a monthly magazine called Şalom-DERĞİ; a supplement published in Ladino called El Amanecer; and an e-newsletter called Dialogue. With a predominantly amateur staff in full command of communication instruments, Şalom looks like a contemporary newspaper, covering a wide range of topics, including news from community institutions, politics, history, art, sports, fashion, traditions, communication, and health. The newspaper has welcomed non-Jewish columnists since the 2000s and has many readers and subscribers besides Turkish Jews. Şalom is considered a respected resource for those seeking news or information about the Turkish-Jewish minority and is a significant source for researchers. This study solely focuses on the print version of the Şalom newspaper.

Representational efforts have been significantly integrated into the activities of the Turkish Jews minority. Several newspapers and journals have been published as a part of these representational efforts; however, for various reasons, many were only able to continue their publications for a limited time, with Şalom alone maintaining continuity since 1947. Only limited number of sources presents knowledge about the

journalism history of the Turkish-Jewish community as a part of representational efforts (see Benbabanste, 1988; Ovadya, 1988; Güleryüz, 2015).

The first newspaper in Judeo-Spanish in the Ottoman Empire was introduced in İzmir on May 22 of 1842 under *La Buena Esperanza* (Good Expectation). A few more newspapers followed this attempt, but these were short-lived. Alternatively, *Israel* (Light of Israel), published in Istanbul in 1853, *El Jurnal Israelit* (Newspaper of Israel), published between 1860 and 1871, and *El Nacional* (The Nation) have been the pioneers. Towards the end of the 19th century, *El Meserret*, *La Verdad*, *El Comercial*, *El Progreso* and many Jewish-Spanish newspapers continued to be published. This number increased after the declaration of the Constitutional Monarchy in 1876 (Baş, 2019). After the proclamation of the Republic, some of these newspapers and magazines continued their work, and new ones opened, among them *El Tiempo* (The Time), *El Telegrafo* (The Telegraph), *El Cudyo* (The Jew), and *El Cugueton* (The Player) in Istanbul. *La Boz de Oriente* (The Light of the East), *La Tienda de Yakob* (The Shop of Jacob) and *La Familia* (The Family) 1931 started their broadcasting life during World War II (Baş, 2019). *Şabat* was the first newspaper of the Turkish-Jewish minority, starting publication on July 4, 1947. *Şabat* did not refrain from criticizing the issues of the minority and Turkish society while responding to anti-Semitic articles that sometimes appeared in Turkish media.

The newspapers and magazines of the Turkish-Jewish community that historically gave voice to the concerns and priorities of the community *Yehuda* in 1948 included *La Verdad* between 1948 and 1953; *La Luz de Turkiya* between 1953; *Atikva*, *La Boz* (Güleryüz, 2015); weekly newspaper *El Tiempo*, published in both Turkish and Ladino; *Türkiye'nin Sesi*, published entirely in Turkish; and monthly *Tiryaki* in August 1994–2000.

Although very active in the first half of the 20th century in terms of variety and number of their media outlets, Turkish Jews experienced a significant decrease in this number; in the 21st century, apart from some bulletins and magazines issued by a

couple of organizations, Şalom newspaper was the only paper to survive; as of 2022, the print media of these few organizations has entirely disappeared, and the 75-year-old Şalom and its annexes alone continue to survive. All the newspapers that started their broadcasting life with Şalom were personal initiatives, and personal initiatives get stuck after a while unless they are institutionalized; when their sales drop, they are doomed to disappear (Molinas, personal interview, October 1, 2019).

Şalom, a weekly newspaper of the Turkish-Jewish minority started in 1947 by Avram Leyon, was initially published in Ladino (Judeo-Spanish spoken by Sephardic Jews). Until 1960 its publication was relatively infrequent, with only a few pages. Avram Leyon, the only child of a low-income family, had to leave high school to support himself and his family. After his military service, he worked for Cumhuriyet newspaper and "La Republique," the French newspaper supplement. Avram Leyon has never been a political party member and has not participated in any opinion group within the Turkish-Jewish minority (Şalom'da 60 Yıl, 1947-2017). Over the years, Şalom expanded in response to the minority demands that it be published more frequently, and the number of its pages and articles increased. It went through a significant restructuring in 1984 under the leadership of Naim Gülerüz following the retirement of Avram Leyon due to health problems. Eventually, the newspaper became a twenty-page edition published in Turkish except for one page in Ladino, which functions as a point of communication with Sephardic communities abroad. Various supplements on city life, culture, children, literature and important events of Jewish history have been published. Şalom newspaper has had the longest uninterrupted publication.

95% of Şalom's readers get the newspaper by subscription. 5% buy the newspaper in kiosks or bookstores like D&R, though, unfortunately, the newspaper lacks an extensive distribution network (Molinas, personal interview, May 30, 2022). As suggested by Ivo Molinas, the editor-in-chief, Şalom often faces the question of availability in Anatolia except for Istanbul. As of 2022, the newspaper has

approximately 5000 subscribers, with 4000 Turkish-Jewish readers and 1000 non-Jewish readers. The website is a significant space to reach more extensive readers with 60,000 visits per week. The visits to the website can reach 70 to 80 thousand, especially when there is exciting news (Molinas, personal interview, May 30, 2021). According to Ivo Molinas, around 40,000 non-Jewish consumers browse Şalom weekly. Molinas defines one of the missions of Şalom as to present Jewish culture to non-Jewish communities internationally and in the Middle East.

El Amaneser began on March 2, 2005 as Şalom newspaper's Ladino insert. El Amaneser traces the Ladino language's history and study the science, literature, and folklore of its glamorous 500-year history. The insert includes a column offering practical instructions for using the Rashi alphabet to follow old books and newspapers. At twenty-four-pages, El Amaneser is the only publication in the world that is published monthly in Ladino. Its editor-in-chief is Işık Civil Karakoç, its editorial director is Karen Gershon Şarhon, and its coordinating editor is Güler Orgun. Local writers like Coya Delevi and Moşe Grosman, and writers from abroad, like Gad Nassi, Yehuda Hatsvi, and Simon Geron, enrich the magazine with their articles. This colorful magazine with great pictures is distributed as a free supplement to Şalom subscribers. In addition to El Amanser, the first issue of Şalom-DERGI, which included nostalgic and contemporary topics, was published in December 2010 and has been published ever since. This magazine supplement of Şalom newspaper is published as seventy-two pages.

This research addresses the dialogic relationship between the news and editorial cartoons on the front pages of Şalom. The communication strategies of Şalom within Turkey's changing political and social context and media regulations are discussed through a multilayered analysis of the newspaper. Firstly, the news on the front pages of Şalom from its establishment until the failed coup attempt of 2016 are analyzed to see the changing communication patterns during the marking periods in the history of Turkish-Jewish minority. Through historical discourse analysis, I intend this

dissertation to offer a broad point of view based on analysis of the news and editorial cartoons on the front covers of Şalom, the multiple interviews with the cartoonist Izel Rozental and Ivo Molinas, the newspaper's editor-in-chief since 2011, and my observations as a Turkish-Jewish minority member.

Newspapers can be seen as historical records, the front pages representing "an authoritative map of the day's events" (Barnhurst and Nerone, 1991). The front cover provides clues about the content of the following pages and the editorial priorities. In this research, front pages constitute a space to understand not only the agenda of the Jewish minority in Turkey but also the communication strategies it develops during censorship and political pressures concerning changes in the social and political structures. Historical and contextualized analysis of the front-page news content in the of internal, foreign, and Israeli news in four different periods from the establishment of Şalom in 1947 until 2016 reveals the changes in the communication strategies of Şalom at moments of political and social changes and crisis within and between Turkey and Israel. It is argued that although Şalom applied different strategies in different time periods, the editorial cartoon corner on the newspaper's front page provided continuity in presenting criticism independent of the political and social agenda of the national and international atmosphere.

The analysis of the front pages has been done on two levels to understand the dialogic relationship between editorial representations of the news on the front pages and the representational efforts through the editorial cartoons.

The first chapter of the dissertation presents a review of the literature on minority media at the intersection of community, ethnicity and the 'other' followed by an examination of the literature on humor and cartoons. Humor has psychological, political, sociological and philosophical dimensions, which have been investigated by philosophers, sociologists, and psychologists since Aristotle. Cartoons are a communication art comprised of drawing and text and carry essential functions, mainly reflecting and interpreting political, social, cultural, economic, philosophical, and

psychological issues. For the analysis of İzel Rozental's cartoons, the first chapter discusses the role of humor in cartoons with a specific focus on editorial and political cartoons and humor as a form of resistance.

The second chapter addresses the multilayered methodology applied to the front pages of the newspaper and the editorial cartoon corners of İzel Rozental's "Tünelin Ucu" to reveal the complexity of Şalom's approach as a minority media. While the content on the front pages is examined through a multilayered historical and comparative analysis, the content of the editorial cartoon corner of "Tünelin Ucu" is analyzed through a semiotic approach and critical discourse analysis. In-depth interviews with Ivo Molinas, the editor-in-chief of Şalom, and İzel Rozental added another layer to understanding the changing strategies of Şalom. The research consisted of the content analysis of the front page based on internal, foreign, and Israeli news in different time periods to trace the changes in the strategies of the newspapers. Each time period was defined by a specific way of expression following the period's Turkish global and national agenda. The most significant contribution to the study of time in discourse analysis has been proceeded by Ruth Wodak (2008) and colleagues with a discourse-historical approach attempt to account for the historical background of the discursive events and explore changes in discourse throughout time. In accordance with Wodak's viewpoints, I elaborated the period from the date when Şalom started its publication life until 2016 the failed coup attempts into four periods and analyzed the discourse in four specific periods after the breaking points such as war, terrorist attacks, particular incidents that affected the minority to a great extent.

Considering that the sequence of events and constructions of the issue is a crucial aspect for understanding the present, the study of social and political matters concerning the specific time period will be elaborated in detail. Based on the elaboration, Şalom will be analyzed in four periods after the breaking points concerning the political atmosphere of Turkey.

Third chapter presents a historical-critical discourse analysis of Şalom through the front-page news in four different time periods. As an insider from the minority, although it has been challenging to be an outsider, I have held fast to my research and concluded through approximately 300 front pages that despite changes in both the national and minority agendas, Şalom maintained different communication strategies depending on the political atmosphere of the time.

The breaking points that mark the beginning and end of each period are examined in detail, as well as changes in tone and style. Between 1947 and 1992, the communication style was identified as "self-enclosed," followed by a period when the community chose to put a particular "emphasis on their Turkish identity" between 1992 and 2003. Examining the front pages of Şalom and observing the content of the news and the tone of its delivery, as an insider from the minority, I determined this period where Turkish- Jews believed it was advantageous to announce to the world how grateful they were to Turkish Government for accepting Jews who sought refugee status in Turkey after they were expelled from Spain in 1492

After the terrorist attack on November 15, 2003, the period named "under the siege and surveillance" revealed Şalom's strategies to remain invisible and silent. As an insider, I observed that it was the period when Turkish Jews felt under siege and surveillance while questioning the ramifications of emphasizing their Turkish citizenship.

Following the Mavi Marmara incident there were attempts to "maintain Turkish-Jewish identity" over the front-page news of Şalom. This period started in 2010 with the Mavi Marmara event, which prompted Turkish Jews to actively raise their voices and fight to find solutions to their problems and ended with the failed coup d'état in 2016. My examination of the front covers and my personal observation as an insider from the minority revealed that during this period, the Turkish-Jewish minority began to take risks challenging the authorities, freely expressing their thoughts and feelings whether following the political agenda or not.

Fourth chapter provides a reading of Şalom through the analysis of “Tünelin Ucu” based on the categories specified by Izel Rozental as security, corruption, foreign policy, democracy, living standards, economics, and diplomacy in war. I argue that “Tünelin Ucu” presents a persistent critique of national and international politics through these categories.

An analysis of his cartoons is provided compared to Şalom's front pages to establish an understanding of his concerns and focus. While the front pages of Şalom demonstrated that the newspaper developed different strategies concerning the circumstances of the period, Rozental's cartoons continued to present criticisms. A closed and in-depth comparative analysis of the front pages of Şalom and Rozental's cartoons concerning the category of "diplomacy in war" allowed me to see how unique the artist's approach has been in terms of providing a space for criticism challenging the editorial point of view with respect to national, global and social agenda. As an editorial cartoonist, İzel Rozental differs from the political cartoonist, not only focusing on the political agenda but also on subjects such as democracy, living standards, diplomacy in times of war, the economy, and corruption. Based on current events, İzel Rozental intends to make readers think about current issues while making them laugh. Appearing on Şalom's front page in "Tünelin Ucu", his cartoons usually employ the same format, with different characters who express recognizable viewpoints visually and/or verbally. The characters' primary role is to criticize often, thus representing resistance.

The last chapter demonstrates how Şalom presented criticism based on the form of the editorial cartoon viewed in four periods. The newspaper's criticism remains fixed, although Turkish Jews are changing and applying different strategies to survive in the world. Şalom, through the editorial cartoon has not hesitated to present criticism independent of the agenda. However, the communication style of the newspaper has changed over the years to fit the changing social and political climate, and its criticism through the editorial cartoon remained consistent.

The last period consists of the period between 2010 and 2016, where Turkish-Jewish minority chose to maintain its Turkish-Jewish identity. "I certainly believe that during its broadcasting life, Şalom achieved a publication parallel to the spirit of the culture and time surrounding the Jewish minority and its leaders. I can't think of any other option" (Molinas, personal interview, May 17, 2021). In contrast, as the in-depth content analysis, semiotic analysis of the cartoons, and interviews reveal, Izel Rozental's "Tünelin Ucu" continued to critique local and global politics regardless of news headlines and the social and political structure of the country. Thus, in Şalom's history, Izel Rozental's editorial cartoon constituted a space of criticism that challenged the editorial stance of holding the publication parallel to the spirit of culture and agenda of the Turkish-Jewish minority.

As a Turkish-Jewish minority member, I was a member of Şalom's editorial staff during my high school years from 1985-1987 and thus was involved in the newspaper's internal news department. The contact I developed in those years with Turkish-Jewish minority opinion leaders and my reporting about Turkish-Jewish minority activities paved the way to research I have conducted since 2018. As a minority insider, I have been privileged to access Şalom archives and spend time evaluating the front covers. Although the experiences of my high school years have supported my research, it is through the process of writing my dissertation that I have been able to develop a more in-depth understanding of Şalom newspaper through the research I have been conducting since then.

## **1. MINORITY MEDIA AND EDITORIAL CARTOONS**

On the one hand, minority media contribute to maintaining cultural identity, traditions, and language, empower minority groups and open up linkages to diasporic connections and affiliations (Dayan, 1998; Riggins, 1992; Tsagarousianou, 2002; Georgiou, 2005). On the other hand, as Dayan (1998) highlighted, they offer 'competing versions of a group identity', establish linkages between the mainstream media and contribute to the emergence of different levels of the public sphere. (Yanardağoğlu, 2013.) The first and significant line of inquiry in literature is based on the invisibility, underrepresentation, and misrepresentation of minorities in the mainstream news media (Larrazet, 2014). As Larrazet argued that multidisciplinary approaches to the media have revealed the coexistence of media by various ethnic and religious groups with significant contribution to the redefinition of national identity, minority group identities and individual identities. Various research underlined the role of minority media in democratization process through the participation of various groups in the public sphere (Rigoni, 2014). In other words, minority media constitutes significant spaces for the collective visibility of minority groups. In parallel to the extensive use of information and communication technologies (ICT), ethnic media is also described as indicators of transnational and transcultural ways of living. (Larrazet and Rigoni, 2014)

"Minority media" is often used synonymously with the concept of ethnic media in various studies (Gülner, 2011; Aydoğan and Kırık, 2012; Hayır, 2017). For this study, I use minority media to refer to ethnic media, as minority media shares important characteristics with ethnic media, aiming to share news and information from its communities and prevent assimilation by ensuring the transmission of religious, cultural, and social structures to future generations. In the following sections, I locate conceptualization of minority media in relation to the conceptualization of community, ethnicity, and the 'other' in the literature.

## **1.1. MINORITY MEDIA AT THE INTERSECTION OF COMMUNITY, ETHNICITY AND THE 'OTHER'**

Although 'community' is one of the building blocks of 'ethnicity' and 'minority' concepts, its definition is vague and has been an ongoing subject of discussion in the literature. The German sociologist, Tönnies first proposed communities to be sociological groupings based on feelings of togetherness and on mutual bonds, which are felt as a goal to be kept up, their members being means for this goal. Özbek Macfarlane (1977) strongly advocated that it be abandoned altogether. More recently, anthropologist Anthony Cohen (1985) stripped away any substantive meaning of the word, showing it to be a contextually contingent symbolic construction.

Bauman (1996) considers the concept of community as a structure that produces interdependent and concerted "ethnic communities" for policies and practices of multiculturalism. In this context, the concept of community is used strategically to support diversity management, assist government approaches to protect ethnic community resources, and promote recognition of ethnic communities. Dreher (2010) posits that because the concept of community is considered objectionable, it is generally used with reluctance and concern to protect the rights of minority groups living in multinational countries and emphasize their differences. In light of these definitions, the concept of community is both unifying and distinctive for multicultural societies. Although the concept of community has numerous interpretations, it can be appropriately summed up as a group of people who have a sense of belonging to the same group; who interact with each other in an organized manner; who usually share common values, beliefs and culture; and who may share a common territory and background.

Ethnicity, as Giddens (2009) pointed out refers to the cultural practices and outlooks of a given community which sets them apart from others, according. Ethnicity is influenced by the social structure in which it is formed and is often used to describe minority issues and race discussions. "We should perhaps also assert that ethnicity, as

a means of categorizing human beings, has widespread credibility and positive affirmation" (Downing J and Husband, 2005). As Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) emphasize, understanding different ethnic groups should be concerned with existing power structures and inequality in a social system. In other words, although ethnicity has a positive affirmation, the concept reveals the inequalities in the social system resulting from internal power struggles.

Similarly, Bauman (2014) argues that ethnicity takes on an existential reality in all systems where unequal structures rationalize cultural differences. According to him, the word "ethnic" is an inescapably relational term that concerns the criteria used to distinguish one ethnic category from another. These ethnic criteria are, in some cases, based on biological criteria called "descent" or "race", but this approach disappears when we study biological foundations. For a century, anthropologists have proven that this descent is not a biological fact but a social structure (Bauman, 2014)

As this definition of ethnic identity covers all minority communities, including religious communities and immigrants, it is appropriate to say that the concept of ethnic media can be discussed from the intersection of minority and community media. "Ethnic media" is often described as newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television channels, and other media published or broadcasted by, for, and/or about a particular ethnic group (Lazarte-Morales, 2012). It exists in societies of different ethnic cultures and can facilitate the fusion of different religious, cultural, and social segments of society. Any examination of the ability of ethnic media to create such a fusion of communities in multicultural societies must follow a discussion of ethnic identity.

Immigrants and minorities mostly produce ethnic media content. In this respect, ethnic media reflects the religious, historical, cultural, and social collection of the ethnic communities to which the content producers belong. Ethnic media content ensures that the concepts and issues valued by the intended audiences are transferred from generation to generation, blended with the social structure of the host country. A study by Jeffres and Hur (1980) observed that ethnic media exists for ethnic groups

that remain unassimilated and closed to the outside. In this respect, ethnic media has an important role in protecting the ethnic identity of these communities. The use of ethnic media strengthens the links between individuals, the community, and its values, thus preventing the individual from being assimilated.

The contribution of ethnic media to the development of society and its unity is indisputable. Ethnic media can act as an activist force or a sign of social change in a multicultural society. It can be a resource to reform the media industry and function symbolically in creating minority identities (Hayır, 2017). From this standpoint, it should be emphasized that *Şalom*, the newspaper of the Turkish-Jewish minority, has been contributing to the creation of minority identity since the establishment of the newspaper. The strategies contributing to the process will be explained in the following chapters and examined in detail. Ethnic media exists at the crossroads of local, national, and global cultures; it is tasked with documenting and expressing a constantly changing and hybridized culture, a shared history, and a collective sense of identity for intended audiences. However, ethnic news is often produced by non-profit organizations comprising people who belong to the communities for which they create content. They emphasize delivering news that will affect their audience and not be subject to negative criticism across the community. Finding valuable resources from diverse backgrounds, determining what is newsworthy, and making deadlines in the context of the competitiveness of the media industry create a challenging environment in which to produce content (Lindgren, 2014).

With exceptions, most ethnic media producers are non-profit organizations and many ethnic media writers, journalists, and publishers work voluntarily. The financial resources of ethnic media organizations are exceptionally low compared to those of mass media outlets; stable resources and funds for publishing are scarce. For these reasons, ethnic media workers often need a second job to make a living and support their families. They must divide their time between their work to sustain themselves and their voluntary ethnic media activities (Budarick, 2016).

The concept of the 'other' mostly refers to those outside the dominant culture. As a result of cultural hegemony, the most powerful dominant culture determines who is labeled 'other' (Devrani, 2017). In this sense, individuals who have different ethnic, religious, social, or cultural characteristics from the dominant majority find themselves in the category of the 'other'. The collective identity of the 'other' also creates a feeling of 'us' and 'them', which strengthens the bond among the group members (Dönmez, 2008). "Other media' is a broader term that refers to non-mainstream media, third media, independent media, radical media, alternative media, radical alternative media, community media, or citizen media" (Alankuş, 2009). This media operates differently from mainstream media and demonstrates an alternative perspective. In this context, it is possible to define alternative media as adopting a critical stance and democratizing the communication environment by exploring topics the mainstream media does not cover (Öztürk and Odabaş, 2017). Mass media operates in a monolithic way with a centralized attitude. Within this framework, people and groups who do not comply with its terms and conditions or disagree with its expressions have no representation. Those groups have two options. The first and easiest is to submit to the normalization process, accepting any assimilation within the system. The second is to create counter-hegemony to demonstrate that the under-represented occupy a different world despite cultural oppression (Öztürk and Odabaş, 2017).

Alternative media is another concept developed in this arena. Speaks to people outside the mainstream, publishing content that departs from society's dominant views and spreads the opinions of minorities, offering views different from the general population's widely-covered mainstream views (Aydoğan and Kırık, 2012). Alternative media expresses the viewpoints of those who experience discrimination because of their ethnicity or religion, are excluded from the political arena or have been silenced. Alternative media is often discussed concerning its potential to create a polygamous and democratic environment that counteracts the ignorance of the global media environment and the singularity that prevents minority cultures from being heard.

According to Alankuş, access to news and information dispels feelings of isolation and creates a sense of belonging (Çoban, 2009). Thus, developing alternative media in a democratic country unites all its populations.

## **1.2. CARTOONS**

Media surrounds and rebuilds individuals' daily lives and acts as an intermediary between the public and the government. Those who hold media power shape daily life. Media also functions as an area where different identities, demands, and resistances regarding cultural and social life take place. Its role in resistance enables movements to reach massive societal audiences to effect social movements. Social resistance movements are tied to the media to mobilize people and confirm collective beliefs and intentions. Media strengthens collective identity and social movements by uniting those involved, opening them up to the outside, and ensuring that the social movement is recognized and countered by the political leadership (Işık, 2013).

As an integral part of media, editorial and political cartoons play a significant role in this resistance." As such, a good cartoon "epitomize[s] the honest debate and the courageous expression of opinion on controversial matters that genuine democracy demands" (Long, 1962).

### **1.2.1. Types and Functions of Cartoons**

Cartoons can bring many rewards: pleasure, joy, insight, and wonder (Goodwin, 2001). As determined by the cartoonist, whether overflowed with words or remaining silent, cartoons can bring surprising recognition, shock, and anger. Cartoons can be masterful inventions giving perfect form to thought and feeling.

Cartoons can function on many different levels. One of the cartoon's social functions is reinforcing solidarity. The cartoon is broadcast in the media and entertains a wide audience while connecting individuals with a single message and content. The offensive function provides criticism, whether the cartoon is social or political.

The cartoon acts as a catalyst for an attack in the form of humiliation or insult. Its intellectual function is to present a puzzle for the readers to solve. According to Sigmund Freud, "The relationship of jokes with a cartoon is that they highlight something hidden or secret" (Freud, 1998). Cartoons stimulate the reader's mind by inviting them to decode what is depicted. As a result, when a reader laughs, it can be deduced that he or she has figured out the hidden meaning of the cartoon. Pioneer cartoonists like Alfred Gerald Caplin, Schlomo Cohen, Thomas Ravvlondson, James Gillray, Raimundo Llerena Ferrer and William Hogarth have played an important role in developing cartoons, focusing on political and social criticism in their work.

Cartoons originated long ago with cave drawings and were later discovered in other ancient artifacts. Over time, cartoons merged with the art of painting and became widespread through the invention of the printing press. The word cartoon comes from the root of caricature, which means to attack and reveal distortions. Eventually, cartoons began to reach wider audiences through modern communication mechanisms, such as newspapers, magazines, and exhibitions. Later they began to appear in TV and movies. Cartoons have undergone many changes over the years, recently progressing in two ways. First, cartoons are created for publication in magazines and newspapers to evaluate political and social issues through exaggeration and humor, addressing large masses. Such cartoons are generally commercial and serve popular culture. Second, artistic cartoons, which do not often use grotesque exaggeration, have emerged, appealing to a high level of culture. A parallel distinction has emerged for films: personal films vs. commercial films. "At the end of the day personal films are made to express something while commercial is meant to sell something. Both can be enjoyable to work on, and those that bring their talent and creativity to the project may feel a sense of pride and accomplishment, but...they both serve different masters" (Wallas, M., 2015).

"Whether commercial or artistic, cartoons depict a specific event or person mostly with a humorous style, using metaphors, symbols, analogies, exaggerations

and/or distortions" (Kemnitz, 1973). Thomas Kemnitz divides cartoons into two main categories according to their purpose (Kemnitz, 1973). The first category includes idea cartoons, whose primary goal is to convey ideas and behaviors or to summarize situations; the humorous narrative is likely to be found in such cartoons. The second category is fun cartoons, whose primary goal is to design communicative humor. In this category, laughter is essential. Hussein (2019), on the other hand, divides cartoons into four categories according to functions: entertainment, agenda setting, aggression reduction and framing.

Cartoon art is advancing rapidly through developing communication networks, which allow new types of cartoons to emerge or already existing varieties to grow. Scholars have differing views on rigid definitions of different types and categories of cartoons. For example, some scholars view political cartoons as a subcategory of editorial cartoons that reflect the political opinion or perspective of the editor and/or the newspaper (Meraki, 2010), while others view them as separate categories. This study focuses mainly on two types of cartoons: editorial and political. The focus of cartoons on social and political events and their publication in newspapers establishes the editorial cartoon subgenre, in which cartoonists support the editorial policies of newspapers through powerful juxtapositions of words and images.

#### **1.2.1.1. Editorial Cartoon**

The editorial cartoon, also called the press cartoon, uses satire to reflect on current events. It is a graphic representation connected with headline news that reflects a particular political perspective in a non-serialized format (Tunç, 2000). Their mission complements the editorial columns of the papers. Caswell (2004) defines the functions of editorial cartoons as the process of "opinion-molding and opinion-reflecting."

After the first cartoon by Benjamin Franklin appeared on May 9, 1754, editorial cartoons increased in number in the late nineteenth century, concomitant with the rise of newspapers and printing technologies, a mutually beneficial partnership developed between cartoonists and publishers. To increase profits, publishers ran popular cartoons

and expanded their circulation and sales. For cartoonists, this created job security and access to a wide range of audiences (Danjoux, 2007).

The American journalism tradition regards editorial cartoons as expressions of the personal views of cartoonists (Meyer, 2015). Within such a tradition, editorial cartoons are more than drawings accompanying articles or text on a subject; they are rhetorical channels. Like editorials, they serve as a persuasive communication to influence readers, triggering responses ranging from outrage to delight (Caswell, 2014). According to Tom Meyer, an American journalist, editorial cartoonists are responsible for elucidating issues and condensing them into easily comprehensible bites. This kind of cartoon has the potential to highlight, visualize, and directly reflect on particular issues that may have been overlooked or ignored in other parts of the newspaper (Haydari, 2011). Drawing cartoons in daily newspapers take work. The daily newspaper cartoonist must follow local and foreign political agendas closely and avoid repeating themselves or contradicting the publishing newspaper's policies.

Editorial cartoons are often confused with political cartoons. Although various kinds of literature refer to the two interchangeably, an editorial cartoon differs from a political cartoon: an editorial cartoon provides a satirical look into society's political agenda, whereas an editorial cartoon looks at the different aspects of society. As editorial cartoons are bound by the publication policy of the periodical they belong to, their mission departs from the mission of political cartoons in delivering the ideology of their broadcaster. In contrast, political cartoons deliver only the ideology of the cartoonist.

#### **1.2.1.2. Political Cartoons**

In this age of communication, politics and the press constantly feed each other. Politicians must announce their power to the public through the press, and the press recognizes that with political material, it will sustain itself. During every period of political history, reports of political scandals have exposed corrupt politicians. For this reason, the news on daily newspapers' front pages addresses politics and politicians'

actions. This is a tight bilateral relationship; after the press determines its position on those wielding political power and their opposition, journalists use daily commentaries and cartoons to support those views.

Cartoons about politicians and current political events are called political cartoons. Their most important feature is that their content is rooted in the time that produces them; their meaning is temporal. Utilizing contemporary political events and scenarios, they lose meaning when the political climate or agenda changes (ÖğdÜ, 2011).

Politics and cartoons have always had a close relationship, with politicians providing abundant material for humor. This has led to the emergence of political humor and the development of its subcategories, including political cartoons (Bayram, 2009). Political humor and political cartoons can improve mass communication, benefiting politicians. Political cartoons communicate what cannot be said indirect forms of political communication. Various disciplines, including journalism, political science, education, and sociology, function in political communication, but no discipline can create the direct form of communication that political cartoons can (Speedling, 2004). The most successful political cartoons do not change the public's fundamental beliefs but help them understand the existence of new relations (Baran, 2009)

Political cartoons are inherently visual or visual-verbal. They are powerful and capable of swaying public opinion and perception. They increase the prestige of newspapers but, at the same time, are likely to trigger social protests and legal actions. Thus, political cartoons offer fertile ground for analyzing visual and visual-verbal content (Swain, 2012). Political cartoons aim to criticize the practices of power and confront attempts to legitimize the prevailing political ideologies of those who sustain the sovereignty of power. As such, political cartoons provide a point of resistance against power and the expressions of power. In periods of increasing pressure, political cartoons raise a voice and show resistance against such pressures (Erdem, 2007).

However, because political cartoons are continuously published in newspapers and magazines, they are more concerned that the reader understands their meaning. For this reason, political cartoons use subtitles and offer more explanations.

### **1.2.2. Humor as Resistance**

With its social, political and historical importance, humor has been widely discussed within various disciplines, including history, philosophy, psychology, communication, and art. Since antiquity, ideas about the concept of humor and the place of humor in everyday life have changed. Ancient philosophers considered humor and laughter as worthless and common. Plato believed that the control of one's logical abilities was lost during laughter. Modern philosophers approach the concept of humor quite differently, valuing it as a unique art form that can be part of more than one artistic discipline. Even though humor includes the experiences of having fun and laughing, the most profound definition of humor in literature is critical amusement; prompting people to think while laughing is supposed to be the principal function of humor. Importantly, humor reveals the comical aspects of life, emerging as a form of art based on reason. It is seen in many areas, from the rudest joke to the thinnest humor. Resulting of the mismatches and incongruities between contrasting ideas that are presented harmoniously, humor enables the reader to perceive a situation entertainingly as it exposes the deficiencies of life, society, and the individual. Humor theorists like Hobbes and Bergson assume that the extent to which individuals in different societies fear being laughed at has implications for humor theory (Davies, 2009).

Humor is also used to express thoughts and feelings that cannot be overtly expressed, which requires tolerance from the producer and audience of humor. The jokes an employee makes to his or her employer or the parodies and cartoons that humorists aim at politicians are made with the support of the humor intrinsic to the subject itself. The humor derives its critical power from being tolerant and open to criticism. In this way, it can reveal what is lacking in the state, the society, and the individual, indirectly contributing to their development. Moreover, it is easier for

people to comprehend the issues revealed by humor than other art forms because humor can appeal to all parts of society.

Sociologist Michael Mulkay (1988) looks for humorous resistance in the complex interaction between seriousness and humor. His "serious mode" is a worldview based on reason and logic where contradictions create problems; on the contrary, his "humorous mode" is fed by contradiction. For humor, contradictions do not constitute a problem because they are the foundation of the humorous mode (Mulkay, 1988). Majken Sorensen (2008) agrees with Mulkay and suggests that humor underscores political divisions. Sorensen adds that in cases where domination is harsh, humor does not reinforce the status quo; instead, it functions as a mode of resistance. Unlike Mulkay and Sorensen, Gregor Benton (1988) argues that humor will not succeed in achieving resistance. He believes laughter is the enemy of greed, injustice, cruelty, and persecution but cannot live within them. That is why humor cannot be an active form of resistance; it only creates the illusion of resistance with no political program to mobilize anyone.

In contrast to Benton, Hannah Arendt posits that the violence of power and domination becomes visible through non-violent resistance to such powers and domination. According to Arendt (1997), sustained respect is necessary to protect authority; since humor is the surest way to weaken this respect, humor is strategic. Dianna Niebylski (2004) asserts that laughing is a common heritage that can resist oppression. Carlsson Henman (2001) and Bertil Neuman (2005) have demonstrated how prisoners of war make the most of humor in their struggle for existence. Chaya Ostrower (2015) states that laughter is a form of rebellion against and resistance to reality.

As Alexander Herzen pointed out, "Laughter contains something revolutionary." It is possible to find traces of resistance, a struggle for existence and survival in humor (Bakhtin, 2014). In many totalitarian regimes, humor is the only weapon the weak possess against the strong. It is also a tool of solidarity that unites the weak and a

vehicle for indirect communication among like-minded people; as such, it ensures the sustainability of social life (Kentel, 1991). Humor is the refuge of the defeated, the excluded, and the oppressed. The harshest criticisms can be expressed through it, making life more liveable for disadvantaged people. People use humor to oppose all authorities in social life because it is the only form of resistance they are permitted. Such secret opposition has an element of softness that reduces the power's oppressive effect. Radicle Brown describes jokes as "allowed irreverence" (Palmer, 1994). According to him, because jokers rest assured in the knowledge that humor will be tolerated, their jokes may criticize various forms of relationships and societal pressures with impunity.

Humor exhibits a carnivalesque structure, a term used by Mikhail Bakhtin to describe a mode that creates rebellion and resistance against oppression through humor, creating a sort of pleasure out of bleak realities (Bakhtin, 2014). Such concept of carnivalesque humor prompts various discussions of everyday resistance. Bakhtin states that carnivalesque humor is one of the most powerful weapons of the oppressed, the humiliated, and the despised; it is also a form of resistance against all established rules, regulations, and hierarchies (Bakhtin, 1984).

### **1.2.3. Humor in Political Critique**

Although researchers have yet to agree on a concrete definition of humor, considering that the concept has been evolving for centuries, what is considered humor today is quite different than what was considered humor in the past. "The term cartoon refers to metaphorical codification and to a satirical or humorous genre through which a cartoonist subtly informs, criticizes and entertains his audience" (El Refaie, 2009). Today, humor aims to invite people to think critically about a subject while finding points or details in that subject that makes them smile or laugh. Questioning the moral values, past experiences, lifestyles, and history of the society it is born out of, humor reveals the socioeconomic and political atmosphere of said society. Furthermore, cartoons, products of humor, aim to transform aspects of people, events, emotions, and

thoughts into unusual narratives through exaggerated drawings, sometimes supported by words.

Although in democracies, politicians and the press are free to use humor, the use of humor in authoritarian and competitive authoritarian regimes is often confronted with challenges and can be used for resistance. The following section will shed light on humor in democratic, authoritarian, and semi-authoritarian regimes, followed by a focus on humor in Turkey to provide background for the Turkish-Jewish minority newspaper *Şalom*.

#### **1.2.4. Humor in Democracies**

In democracies, both politicians and the press are usually free to use humor. Politicians use humor to outline their political philosophy, to relieve politically tense situations, or to address a sensitive point without distressing society (Nilsen, 1990). They use it to acknowledge their mistakes, making humor a tool that brings the public and politicians together. In democracies, politicians can express their weaknesses, taking refuge in understanding society. This is a fundamental aspect that sets democracies apart from repressive regimes.

In a democratic country, an ordinary person can joke about politicians. Contemporary comedians are severe critics, and their criticisms often include issues that are undesirable to be made public by politicians. Still, comedians or the public who use such humor face no punishment and little personal consequence in democratic countries. In addition, political satire or TV programs can influence the audience's political knowledge and attitudes toward politicians (Holbert, Lambe, Dudo and Carlton, 2007). These programs are not tolerated in repressive systems and are supported in democracies.

The comfortable use of humor in democratic societies softens criticism because society is not subjected to constant governmental pressure. Freedom of expression and the lack of repercussions for airing political beliefs center politics and policies in daily

discussions. As a result, the severity of criticism, which emerges through humor, is more pronounced in democratic states.

### **1.2.5. Humor in Authoritarian Regimes**

Unlike democratic regimes, where freedom of expression is protected, authoritarian regimes provide a completely different political and social atmosphere. Freedom of expression is a prerequisite for developing political humor; however, in authoritarian states, freedom of expression is highly problematic, with many journalists risking interrogation, arrest, and imprisonment (Johnston, 2005). Therefore, criticizing the authority is a contradictory act and, as such, uncommon in authoritarian states. As a result, exploring the concept of personal freedoms is appropriate before addressing the humor issue in authoritarian regimes.

Étienne de La Boétie, one of the founders of modern political philosophy, discusses power and obedience in his famous work *Discours de la Servitude Volontaire*. La Boétie claims people lose all subjectivity due to power mechanisms (2014, p. 35). According to him, people cannot remember the meaning of freedom in oppressive states beyond the concept of a "love of freedom." Such an authoritarian regime strictly regulates the content, structures, and locations belonging to the individual; thus, free spaces need to be protected from the regime itself. In Western democratic states, legal rights often protect alternative groups from oppression; in other words, the state undertakes the protection of these groups. However, in authoritarian regimes, repression and restrictions make free organizations impossible, leading instead to the formation of communities and movements that support the issues the regime deems appropriate. These tend to cluster around variable combinations of space, culture, and structure (Johnston, 2005). Examples include the formation of the German Girl's Union in Nazi Germany or religious sects under Islamic authoritarian regimes.

Unlike a democratic state, an authoritarian regime will not allow any philosophy, ethos, or identity that differs from or criticizes the regime to exist. In this context, a sense of humor is considered dangerous, especially when criticizing a regime

and/or its authoritarian leader. While democracies exhibit an open and egalitarian sense of humor, humor produced in authoritarian states is under tight control by the regime; thus, it is often coded, characterized by allusion, and concealed in some way. In this context, humor becomes a weapon wielded by suppressed people within authoritarian systems, an expression that leaders will never tolerate. In such circumstances, humor has a revolutionary function.

Central to this revolutionary model is a discourse contrary to authority and an element of political resistance (Johnston, 2005). Such discourses are quite strong in content and are one of the few indicators that the authority's decisions are being questioned. Humor provides an avenue for the public to make themselves heard by the government because it can penetrate the culture of fear that has become widespread in repressive regimes. It acts as an effective coping mechanism against tyrannical government practices and encourages government officials to act in reactionary behaviors. Humor provides a low-cost entry point to social action; it encourages political mobilization and demonstrates an alternative and more attractive reality to the public. Humor weakens the standard repression practices used by authoritarian leaders, such as accusing, blocking, and using laws that censor social mobilization (Varol, 2014). Humor is used as an important passive resistance tool in authoritarian states. It also unites the masses, unable to come together in any other platform due to the constraints of the authoritarian state. Therefore, humor emerges as a necessity wherever there is oppression and naturally exists reactively.

Academic studies with different approaches to humor generally overlap at certain points. One of these points is that humor is used mostly in interpersonal and mass communication to reduce the tension in interactions and soften disputes. A laugh following the elements of humor used in this context dissolves the negative energy and allows individuals to cope with tense situations. This relief approach focuses on emotions, while other theories of non-compliance concern cognitive processes that allow acceptance and resolution of discrepancies in a text or situation. Theorists who

advocate the superiority approach argue that all humor activities stem from an individual's desire to feel superior to another. All these approaches acknowledge the conciliatory and unifying effect of humor. Nevertheless, humor, especially directed towards authoritarian leaders, is thought to be related to the superiority approach.

In authoritarian states, the elements of humor are only allowed in a manner that suits their leaders in matters that they see fit. Like many other details in a repressive system, humor is only in the hands of the authority, which reinforces the frustration of society. At this point, the most interesting function of humor comes into play. This function is what Meyer calls a jesting shield, which serves as a tool to challenge authority (Meyer, 2000). This is where humor against authoritarian leaders coincides with the theory of superiority. Society, which succeeds in laughing at the authority that suppresses, restricts, prevents, and oppresses it, believes it can be more powerful than this authority. In this way, society states that it is superior to the dominant authority. Of course, this is not only the case for authoritarian states and leaders. This reactive function of humor applies to all systems, but humor used against authoritarian leaders in oppressive regimes serves as a weapon.

As a type of rebellion against authoritarian regimes, humor appears in many different forms. Political cartoons, photographs, videos, graffiti, tweets, Facebook messages, and even jokes told in everyday conversations are all revolutionary humor. Revolutionary humor can draw attention to tragedies through dark comedy and may include sharp satire of authoritarian leaders. Oversights of leadership are often the source of humor used in protests (Varol, 2014). The use of humor against an authoritarian regime involves significant risks. Revolutionary humor attempts to critique the existing authoritarian regime, and the regime sees such expressions of humor as attacks against it. Therefore, the regime considers humorists who carry out these creative attacks dangerous and sometimes even considers these expressions of humor acts of terrorism. The regime responds by prescribing sanctions of the utmost severity, often imprisonment or execution, as deterrents (Karam, 2012).

Participants in social movements gain healthy self-confidence when they joke about their oppressive governments and leaders, which they always fear. They often use humor to draw attention to their humiliation or suffering. Using a global language, they attract curiosity and attention at home and abroad (Varol, 2014), informing and hopefully mobilizing the masses. The duration and intensity of the attention they attract locally and globally determine whether they have an opportunity to pressure the regime they live under. The humor continues this function in several authoritarian regimes. For example, Syrian protesters use humor in their ongoing resistance against the Assad regime, from light humor on posters and banners to tougher humorous discourses in online shows. Sudan offers another example of humor used in actions against authoritarian regimes. The protesters in Sudan have turned Dictator Omar el Bashir's humiliating references against them into symbols of resistance.

The protests against the dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt in 2011 eventually ended the regime. These protests served as a stage where humor against oppression could develop. The humor directed at the government's repressive practices intensified as these practices themselves intensified and created a social movement with various resistance techniques. In addition, the spread of this humor on a global scale allowed revolutionary humor to find different resonance points (Varol, 2014). One of the most important achievements of the Arab Spring protests of 2011 was the unification of ethnic and religious groups who had been enemies for centuries. With its unifying power, humor was one of the most important factors that brought these communities together. Though revolutionary, this humor understood that the problems were shared and originated from a common source; thus, these different communities united in one movement to achieve a common goal.

#### **1.2.6. Humor in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes**

In competitive authoritarian systems, also called semi-authoritarian regimes, opposition parties and governments in power are protected. Opposition parties with different political approaches from the government can criticize the system. The

opposition is protected by law to function to counterbalance authority fully. In competitive authoritarian rule, the press is another institution that checks and balances the prevailing system. The same laws that protect the opposition party offer protection to the press. Thus, the press can criticize the government without fear and uphold transparency principles.

However, not all competitive authoritarian systems and leaders tolerate criticism, and some use their power to interfere with these safety measures. In some competitive authoritarian countries, criticism of authority has been deemed a crime against the state. This prevents public criticism and spreads a culture of fear that intensifies over time. This weighs on individuals, producing feelings of restriction, frustration, and guilt, adding to the stress of daily life. When citizens cannot overtly show their dissatisfaction with government practices, humor alleviates this environment of oppression.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

A multilayered methodology is applied in the analysis of the front-page news and the editorial cartoons of İzel Rozental published on the front page of Şalom. Multiple in-depth interviews with İzel Rozental (conducted on October 20, 2019; July 7, 2020, May 17, 2021, and January 21, 2021) and in-depth interviews with İvo Molinas, the chief editor of Şalom (conducted on September 1, 2019, and May 17, 2021) are also incorporated into the discussions to understand the newspaper's editorial approach, the patterns and themes presented in "Tünelin Ucu" by İzel Rozental and the strategies applied in the cases of disagreement between İzel Rozental, as the cartoonist and İvo Molinas as the chief editor.

While newspapers can be seen as spaces that record history (Ames, 1989), the front pages represent "an authoritative map of the day's events" (Barnhurst and Nerone, 1991). In attracting the reader's attention, the front cover either puts the content at the reader's disposal and/or provides clues about the content in the interior pages. Br Tyler Bridges, an American reporter for The Advocate/The Times-Picayune who has

contributed to The Washington Post, Politico, and other publications describes the front page as "the reader's window to the tone and the 'spirit' of a newspaper." The front page is the first (and sometimes the only) page seen by most readers; the design often tends to be more dramatic than interior pages due to the need to persuade readers to purchase the newspaper and read it, especially on a news day of national importance. The newspaper's front cover can be informative, engaging, and entertaining simultaneously. In this research, front pages constitute a space to understand not only the agenda of the Jewish community in Turkey but also the communication strategies they develop during censorship and political pressures concerning changes in the social and political structures. Comparing the content categories on the front page in terms of internal, foreign, and Israeli news in four different periods since *Şalom* was established in 1947 up until 2016 revealed the changes in the communication strategies of *Şalom* at moments of political and social changes and crisis within Turkey and between Israel and Turkey.

The analysis of the front pages has been done in two levels to understand the dialogic relationship between editorial representations of the news on the front pages and the representational efforts through the editorial cartoons.

Content Analysis of the Front Cover

Content Analysis of "Tünelin Ucu"

While critical discourse analysis provides the historically contextualized analysis of the discourse within the socio-political contexts, semiotic analysis contributed to the elaboration on the deeper meaning of codes presented in the editorial cartoons concerning the political atmosphere of both the country and worldwide.

## **2.1. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE NEWSPAPER FRONT PAGES**

Content analysis is one of the most common research methods used by researchers working in the media field. Charles R. Wright (2017) defines content analysis as a research technique that systematically classifies and describes the content

according to predefined categories. Wright (2017) argues that this categorization creates a space to trace the patterns and consistencies by providing a non-intrusive method for identifying views, concerns, and discourses (Macnamara, 2018).

Şalom has been published weekly except for the weeks when the religious holidays were celebrated. For this research, the content of 3000 weekly issues was archived from the foundation of Şalom in 1947 until a coup attempt on July 15, 2016, which led to a new political and social era in the history of Turkey. I divided analysis into four different periods in relation to the political and social issues impacting Turkish-Jewish minority.

- The first period begins when Şalom started its publication in 1947 and ends in 1992 when Turkish Jews celebrated the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Sephardic Jews to the Ottoman Empire.
- The second period covers 1992 to 2003, from the Turkish Jews' celebration of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Sephardic Jews to the Ottoman Empire to the terrorist attacks on the Neve Shalom Synagogue and the Beth Israel Synagogue in Istanbul, attacks which directly targeted the Turkish-Jewish minority.
- The third period covers 2003 to 2010, starting with the terrorist attacks at the Neve Shalom Synagogue and the Beth Israel Synagogue in Istanbul and ending with the Mavi Marmara incident, a military operation by Israel against civilian ships of the Gaza flotilla in the Mediterranean.
- The fourth period begins in 2010 with the Mavi Marmara incident and analyzes the period until the failed coup attempt in 2016.

For the analysis of each period, I closely examined twelve issues per year, one representing each month of the year. I also examined a hundred issues from the period between 1947-2016. Overall, I examined approximately 300 issues in detail.

Comparisons across different periods is grouped according to number of Israeli, foreign and internal news categories taking place on the front pages. Such categorization allowed me to have an understanding of the priorities of Şalom in covering the news whether the focus is on the domestic issues, relationship between Israel and Turkey or international news.

In determining the news as internal, foreign or Israel content, my criteria included:

The names of individuals in the news;

The names of countries in the news;

The events that are the subject of the news.

The Israeli news category consists of individuals in the news who are either originally Israelis and/or related to Israel. The country in the news was Israel, and the events took place in Israel.

Internal news included the news about the events taking place in Turkey with a focus on Turkey as a place and individuals associated with Turkishness or the identity of Turkey. The news about the Turkish-Jewish community is also included in this category.

Foreign news is where the individuals that take place in the news are neither Israeli nor Turkish but foreigners. The countries in this news are neither Israel nor Turkey, but foreign countries and the events occur in the country above.

To determine the percentages, I divided the news items on the front cover by the news items in each category: internal, foreign and Israel. This gave me an idea about what type of news was emphasized or preferred during the defined periods (Graph 1).

**Graph 1: Distribution of the News Categories by periods.**

YEAR	INTERNAL NEWS		FOREIGN NEWS		ISRAEL NEWS	
	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER
1947-1992	37%	315	31%	225	32%	270
1992-2003	35%	66	36%	77	29%	55
2003-2010	48%	63	38%	49	14%	14
2010-2016	44%	48	32%	36	24%	24

In the analysis of each period, I have also taken into consideration the headlines and other components of the newspaper such as the language of the news or the size and color of the captions. Şalom has been a minority newspaper published in different language than Turkish almost for half of its publication year. The newspaper was published in four pages, mainly in Ladino, with a corner post in Turkish on the front page until 1983. For the appealing younger generation who did neither speak Ladino nor had any intention to learn the mother tongue, Şalom changed its main language to Turkish in 1984 after reorganizing the editorial board, which consisted mostly of young adults. Some sections in Ladino continued until 2000s to keep communication between Sephardic communities worldwide. The use of color was also one of the factors defining the identity of Şalom, with the newspaper turning fully color after 1992, to become more attractive and appeal to a larger readership (Şalom'da 60 yıl, 1947-2017). This time period coincided with the changes taking place in the social and political environment and media industry following the neoliberalization policies of the post-1980 military intervention era. The size of the captions remained the same until 2000 when a bigger format was adopted and the use of visuals increased in number on the front page. The front page does not include Ladino after the 2000s, and the space for the mother tongue is limited within the newspaper.

While critical discourse analysis provides the historically and comparatively contextualized analysis of the news as discursive spaces, semiotic analysis of the cartoons reveals the background concepts concerning the country's political atmosphere and worldwide.

## **2.2. CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS: DISCOURSE-HISTORICAL APPROACH**

The critical discourse analysis (CDA) in the second layer is used to categorize the front pages under the specific tone of expression Şalom uses to inform its readers. CDA has been a significant line of research in the study of media discourse with various models of analysis developed by Van Dijk (2005); Norman Fairclough (2003) and Ruth Wodak (2005) Wodak (2009) defines discourse as anything from a historical monument, lieu de memoire, a policy, a political strategy, narratives in a restricted or broad sense of the term, text, talk, a speech, topic-related conversations, to language perse. Coming from different disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, literary studies, media and communication studies discourse analysis relied on the theoretical perspectives of various disciplines (Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Tonkiss, 2006). In this respect, discourse analysis is not a single integrated theory, method or practice. Instead, it is heterogeneous qualitative research conducted in different research traditions and methods (Tonkiss, 2006). One popular approach in CDA refers discourse as a “form of social practice; describing language as a form of social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s), and social structure(s) which frame it" (Meyer, 2009).

The most significant contribution to the study of time in discourse analysis has been advanced by Ruth Wodak (2008) and colleagues with a discourse-historical approach accounting for the historical background of the discursive events and exploring changes in discourse throughout time. Historical discourse analysis occurs at two levels involving the examination of the course of social matters and their wider political, social and economic context (Leuwen and Wodak, 1999). As Carvalho (2008)

suggested, a comparative synchronic analysis allows an understanding of various representations of an issue at the time of writing one specific news text. In other words, by cross-referencing news outlets and checking original documents, researchers can form a more comprehensive understanding of the representations.

Considering the news as a discourse of the political, economic, and cultural context, I followed the discourse-historical approach in the analysis of *Şalom* to present a historical understanding of the changes taking place in the strategies and location of the newspaper. In accordance with Wodak's viewpoints, I identify four different time periods from the date when *Şalom* started its publication life to the 2016 failed coup attempts in relation to significant incidents that greatly affected the Turkish-Jewish community. Considering that the sequence of events and constructions of the issue is a crucial aspect for understanding the present, the study of social and political matters concerning the specific time periods are elaborated in detail. I have underlined the consistencies and the differences in four different periods, both in terms of *Şalom* as well as the political atmosphere of the country during 1947-2016

### **2.3. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE EDITORIAL CARTOONS ON THE FRONT COVER**

“*Tünelin Ucu*” started in 1991 and with regular weekly publishing except the weeks when the religious holidays were celebrated. Approximately 1300 (25 years x 52 weekly cartoon) editorial cartoons were published for the time period covered in this dissertation. Since some of the issues were not archived, I was only able to reach 1000 issues with detailed analysis of 500 cartoons for this research. For the content analysis of the *Tünelin Ucu* corner, I used following criteria:

- The names of the individuals and the public figures.
- The countries in the cartoons.
- The events subject to the cartoons.

The cartoon was grouped concerning the individuals and public figures (whether politicians or representative groups of various communities), the countries and the representing events. The categories of democracy, corruption, living standards, security, foreign policy, and war/peace are defined based on the accounts of İzel Rozental. The ones that were not included in any of the categories were collected under the "other " title.

**Graph 2: Percentages of the Cartoons Throughout the Time Periods.**

YEAR	1991-2003		2003-2010		2010-2016	
	Cartoons	Percentage	Cartoons	Percentage	Cartoons	Percentage
<b>Democracy</b>	23	5%	35	10%	18	5%
<b>Corruption</b>	85	19%	64	18%	88	26%
<b>Economy</b>	12	3%	3	1%	10	3%
<b>Living Standards</b>	68	15%	93	27%	70	21%
<b>Security</b>	30	7%	27	8%	13	4%
<b>Foreign Policy</b>	78	18%	57	16%	50	15%
<b>War/Peace</b>	114	26%	33	10%	45	13%
<b>Other</b>	32	7%	34	10%	42	13%

The total division number of cartoons determines the percentages by the number of cartoons in a specific time.

While it is difficult to reach to an agreement on the definition of corruption, in this research corruption will be used in reference to the activities in which public officials, bureaucrats, legislators, and politicians use powers delegated to them by the public to further their economic interests at the expense of the common good.

In the interview I made with Ivo Molinas, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper, on October 1, 2019, I came to believe that the administrative staff of Şalom does not want to attract negative attention toward the Turkish-Jewish minority by criticizing the government.

İzel Rozental uses metaphors in his cartoons to communicate ambiguous or problematic issues, making his message more familiar to the audience and easier to understand.

İzel Rozental emphasizes criticizing the living standards of the people not only in the country but also around the world. Cartoons are his way of expressing the criticism of the low standards people have as well as the criticism he underlines for the lack of ability of the governments to improve those standards. In addition to the lack of ability of the previous governments, the cartoonist also criticized the fact that they are not giving priority to the living standards of their population.

When defined correctly, security guides governments' policies properly. "The political responsibility for ensuring security is distributed in all dimensions upward from national states to international institutions; downwards to regional or local governments and horizontally to non-governmental organizations, to public opinion and the press as well as to both abstract forces of nature and the dynamics of the market" (Rothschild 1995). The cartoons in the security category in *Şalom* focus on how security can guide the policies of the Turkish government. In his cartoons, Rozental underlines governmental policies regarding security for not emphasizing individuals' well-being but rather giving priority to political interests.

“Peacebuilding is a confusing concept with multiple meanings. UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali's Agenda have used the term Peace in 1992. It has been defined as actions that identify and support structures that tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (Ghali, 1992) at local and global levels simultaneously (Lindholm, K. and Olsson, E., 2011). Issues of conflict, war, and peace have different status in the cartoons by Rozental.

A detailed analysis of the percentages will reveal that İzel Rozental has focused on diplomacy in war as defined war vs. peace category in the chart between 1991-2003 with a percentage of 26%. It is also the period when the Gulf War started in 1991.

Whatever priorities the governmental authorities have, the “Tünelin Ucu” corner in Şalom puts its criticism against the diplomacy conducted during times of war. It has the cartoons in the foreign policy category with a percentage of 18% in, in the third row after the corruption category at about the same percentage where the artist sheds light on how corrupted humanity might become when their priorities are concerned. The living standards category follows with a percentage of 15% as those standards get worse and worse during the war.

The same categories share the first three rows between 2003-2010: Living standards occupy the first row with a percentage of 27%. Thus, the second category with a percentage of 18%. The criticism of the foreign policy with a percentage of 16% follows: The numbers show how Şalom continues to assert criticism against the diplomats in charge of achieving reconciliation when there is conflict between the countries around the world, taking the cartoon as the tool.

A similar aspect is revealed in the following period with a slight change in the categories which still occupy the first three rows: The corruption category, with a percentage of 26%, is followed by the living standards category. Then comes the category defined as foreign policy positioned closely to the war and peace category. Şalom continues to criticize the devaluation of the universal values that result in the corruption of those as well as the corruption in living standards.

In addition to the categories mentioned below, whose details will further be given in the following chapters, I have focused on the use of color in the cartoon. İzel Rozental, who started drawing in the newspaper, was pretty much against it: he applied color when necessary but with care because he noticed that sometimes the newspaper's printed colors were so intense that they overwhelmed his black and white illustrations, which resulted in the disappearance of the cartoons. Therefore, he used color as little as possible and only occasionally (Rozental, personal interview, September 7, 2020)

The speech bubbles have been a major concern in my analysis of the cartoons in "Tünelin Ucu." The artist prefers not to use speech bubbles, preferring the cartoon to be self-explanatory; he tries to be minimal (The artist made this preference clear in my interview with him on February 22, 2022). The in-depth interviews have helped me to go into further detail to elaborate my findings, as in the case of the speech bubbles. Additional examples are given in the following chapters, and Rozental's sentences serve as references when necessary.

"For example, when I am writing an article, first I write 800, or 900 words, then I shorten the text to 400 or 500 words. I eliminate unnecessary sentences, include only the key information, and do it well" (Rozental, personal interview, January 22, 2022). When he feels the necessity for the speech bubbles, he tries hard to limit them to a few words. "The person looking at you is getting a little tired, I am getting very tired, too, but I'm doing it. I am drawing. The reader should try to understand the cartoon as it is!" (Rozental, personal interview, January 22, 2022). Although the denotative level is based on the image and the narrative, if there is any, the reader is expected to go deeper into the process, taking the steps one after the other at the connotative level to resurrect the new meaning.

I paid particular attention to the size of the images. I discovered that the image size is bigger when the artist attaches a specific meaning and smaller when the meaning is less important. The artist expects the reader to pay attention to the size and deduce its importance accordingly, minimizing the need for speech bubbles. The reader is encouraged to venture deeper into analytical thinking, considering both the alignment of the images and their sizes without needing additional words.

The alignment of the images has also been my point of concern: I tried to evaluate the alignment according to whether the images face each other or stand back-to-back. I worked hard to analyze whether the alignment between the images was horizontal or vertical.

I have followed Efthimadou's (2020) approach to the semiotics of the image, analyzed the cartoon accordingly through six different mental operations, and elaborated their semantic interpretations by taking the paper's front cover into account in a comparative way of looking.

#### **2.4. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF EDITORIAL CARTOONS**

A two-staged semiotic analysis is practiced as a tool. The first stage is implementing methods that are used by semiotics: Denotation. The second stage is investigating the lateral meaning deduced from the denotative process: Connotation.

Representing a broad range of studies in art, literature, anthropology, and the mass media, semiotics is influenced by the works of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and American logician and philosopher C.S. Peirce. Although the briefest definition of semiotics refers to the study of signs after Ferdinand de Saussure, the definition can be broadened to the extent that not only "signs" as we understand it, but to involve everything that "stands for" something else. Thus, the denotative level, where we see signs as we understand, and the connotative level, where the hidden meaning is revealed, will be used to categorize the cartoon on the front page of Şalom.

According to Efthimiadou (2020), 6 different types of mental processes are distinguished from exploiting the versatility of mental signs to discern the meaning existing in the semantic interpretation of an image. I used the proposal to discern the meaning of the cartoon in "Tünelin Ucu" by İzel Rozentel.

##### **1. Operation of the Perception**

I used this level to clarify the objects, the people and/or the settings in the editorial cartoon to be able to interpret the narrative in terms of the material variations between them.

##### **2. Identification Operation**

I used the similarity or metaphor in the editorial cartoon to enable the reader to evoke several objects concerning a single inductive object. As Stock points out (2004), metaphoric aspect of an image is realized by a morphing technique engineered blending of visual features to create a realistic impression of an imaginary. Images of objects versus real objects in the cartoon shed light on the operation of identification. While “**inference operation**” sheds light on what is not obvious in the editorial cartoon, decoding operation addresses the clues and signs, extra-visual codes from the codes of everyday life, as well as specific visual codes as used in the editorial cartoon.

### 3. Operation of the Association of Ideas

I used this level to associate the ideas in terms of similarity and contiguity through associating converging or diverging elements and contrast using lateral thinking.

4. Decoding Operation: I used this level to enable the reader to move from the public image to the focus of a specific object. In addition to the clues and signs, extra-visual codes from the codes of everyday life, as well as specific visual codes and semiogenesis, are straightforward in the editorial cartoon. Semiogenesis derives from the unexpected birth of a new original code or the association of already instituted codes (Ephimiadou, 2020).

5. Operation of Association of Ideas: I used this level to associate the ideas in terms of similarity and contiguity through associating converging or diverging elements and contrast using lateral thinking. Tardy Mitchell (1989) focuses on the strategies of visual communication by highlighting the semiotic status of represented objects. For Mitchell, visual communication presupposes the shared possession of a triple culture. In the same image, the same visual element can, depend on the circumstances, be either an identification, a sign(decoding) or a symbol (interpretation) (Tardy, 1989).

6. Isotopy Resolution evaluates the ideas leading to multiple interpretations of the context.

### **3. READING ŞALOM THROUGH THE FRONT-PAGE NEWS**

In this section through the historical contextual analysis of the front-page news, a detailed reading of Şalom will be presented in four different time period defined by the social, political, and international events directly or indirectly impacting the Turkish-Jewish community. The first period starts with the beginning of Şalom in 1947 and covers until 1992, when Turkish Jews celebrated the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Sephardic Jews to the Ottoman Empire. The second period covers between 1992 and 2003 with the terrorist attacks at the Neve Shalom Synagogue and the Beth Israel Synagogue in Istanbul, directly targeting the Turkish-Jewish minority. The third period takes place between 2003 and 2010 with the Mavi Marmara incident, a military operation by Israel against civilian ships of the Gaza flotilla in the Mediterranean. The fourth period begins in 2010 until the failed coup attempt in 2016. While the selected content analysis of the international, national and Israel news in the specific time periods do not directly reveal the communication strategies of Şalom by itself; yet they constitute an indication of editorial preferences when interpreted in relation the historical and political context of the time periods and the interviews with İvo Molinos, the editor chief of Şalom. As a result of multidimensional analysis of the periods, the self-enclosed dimension of Şalom is underlined in the first time period until 1992. The news presents an emphasis on Turkish identity during the second period until 2003 with the terrorist attacks at the Neve Shalom Synagogue and the Beth Israel Synagogue in Istanbul. The third period, from 2003 until Mavi Marmara incident in 2010, is the period of siege and surveillance, while the last period up to the failed coup attempt of 2016 is about maintaining Turkish-Jewish identity.

#### **3.1. A SELF-ENCLOSED COMMUNITY (1947–1992)**

This section begins when Şalom started its publication in 1947 and ends in 1992 when Turkish Jews celebrated the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Sephardic Jews to the Ottoman Empire. For a comprehensive view of the period, it is crucial to

recognize events throughout the history of the Turkish-Jewish minority before the newspaper's establishment.

Throughout the years following the Turkish-Jews settlement in Anatolia, Turkification policies pressured non-Turkish speakers to speak Turkish in public. This was the purpose of the "Citizens speak Turkish" campaign initiated by the Turkish government in 1934. According to Levi and Gaon (2007), having lived under threats to their homes, businesses, jobs, families, and native languages, hiding and keeping quiet was a kind of reflexive defense mechanism for Turkish Jews. The more visible they were, the more open to the threats they became. As a member of the Turkish-Jewish minority, I grew up not only listening to those discriminations and Turkification policies mentioned above but also witnessing how afraid my grandparents were of coming to the attention of Turkish authorities. As a result of the long history of discrimination, Turkish Jews turned inwards. In line with the community's threat, Şalom also adopted self-enclosed strategies by prioritizing foreign news and addressing the internal news in the most objective and distant way possible.

The internal news in this time period constituted 37% of the total content of selected issues, with a focus on the country's agenda and with the news equally distributed between the foreign news and news from Israel. Only a small portion of the news was spared for news of the community, with the news about the country situated on the left side of the paper and news about Israel on the right side. Rather than overtly expressing, through the period that started in 1947 with the establishment of Şalom up until 1971, the news on the front cover continuously adopted an informative tone, giving priority to the news relating to the political and social agenda of the period. The news that concerns Turkish-the Jewish minority occupied a smaller space on the front page, with a very narrow focus on the concerns and challenges the community faces but emphasizing the unity within the country.

The establishment of the Israeli state on May 14, 1948, was an important event of the period. The coverage of this event in Şalom constitutes a window in history for

us to understand the relationship Şalom established with Israel. After the foundation of Israeli State in 1948, a significant number of Turkish-Jews community decided to leave Turkey. Starting from the 1950s, the profile of Turkish Jews changed with the Anatolian Jewish communities largely disappearing and families living in the historic Jewish neighborhoods of Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara either immigrating to Israel or moving to newer mixed middle-class neighborhoods (Neyzi, 2005). In that period, the headlines of Şalom neither covered the experiences and voices of the community nor the changes taking place within the community.

On September 6–7, 1955, violent attacks took place against non-Muslim minorities living in Istanbul, including Greeks (around 100K), Armenians, and Jews. Thousands of houses, shops, schools, sanctuaries, and properties were attacked and plundered. The incident was called the Istanbul Pogrom and was a black mark in the history of Turkey. This resulted in another wave of immigration to Israel (Neyzi, 2005). At the time, Şalom continued to use an informative tone, reporting the events of the period and choosing to focus on the national agenda. In the public sphere, Turkish Jews historically remained silent about the September 6–7 events until the issue was opened for discussion through the television serial *Kulüp* (Club) produced for Netflix in 2022. For instance, during the September 6–7 events, Şalom did not focus on the horrific details but tried to report from a neutral standpoint to prevent tensions from intensifying.

Figure 1: Şalom, June 29, 1960



On the front cover of Şalom dated June 29, 1960, two main news items are presented. With the story titled “La Fiesta del 19 Mayo restutuada i reestabilisada por la Revolusion” (the celebration of May 19 has been restored and reestablished by the Revolution) Şalom gives space to the celebration of the National May 19 festival as an event playing an important role on the national stage. Although the news concerning the Turkish-Jewish minority, titled, "Todos los kompatriotas deven ser aunados Komo ermanas" (All the compatriots are united as if they were brothers and sisters) are given as the headline, the news has been reported with an optimistic tone to emphasize the hope that a peaceful atmosphere in the country is established, yet the concerns of the minority are not brought to attention. Şalom, during this period, chose to use an optimistic tone to report news that concerns the Turkish-Jewish minority rather than shedding light on the problems that the minority is faced with. A self-enclosed attitude is salient on the front pages.

### 3.1.1. The 1971 Coup and Introduction of Business into the Media Industry (1970–1980): Şalom keeps the self-enclosed attitude

In the 1970s, temporary or permanent bans were imposed on newspapers (Odyakmaz, 2012). Family businesses dominated the Turkish press until businesses entered the media industry in this decade. Shortly after the assassination of journalist and human rights activist Abdi İpekçi while he was editor-in-chief of Milliyet, one of the main Turkish daily newspapers, Doğan Group bought the ownership of Milliyet, marking one of the first important examples of the change in the media towards capitalism and monopolization. Doğan Group has become one of the most important and powerful actors in the media industry of the 1990s with its close relationship with the government. Şalom remained focused on the national agenda, using an informative tone for its reporting on the national and global agendas.

Figure 2: Şalom, December 23, 1970



As an example, the front cover of December 23, 1970, gave priority to the news that concerned the countries abroad such as Russia and Israel: "Avventura en Leningrad del preçeso de onze judios" and "Protestation del Parlamento Israelliano el preçeso de judios sovietikos" while the concerns and the priorities of the community had not had any coverage.

### **3.1.2. The 1980 Coup and the Liberalization of the Economy (1980–1990): Şalom’s Silence on Turkish Jews**

In January 1980, the government declared a far-reaching economic reform program, and the Turkish economy became a fully liberalized structure. As a result of the liberalization, a large part of the media industry was dominated by conglomerates, which changed the press on a fundamental level, including the issues related to operational activities, content production, and the freedom of speech. The introduction of computers and new printing technologies to the Turkish market followed the economic reform program. These factors increased operational costs while circulation and advertising revenues declined (Yeşil, 2016).

After the coup in 1980, many oppositional leftist journalists and writers were put in prison, including Aziz Nesin, Bekir Yıldız, Şukran Kurdakul, and Asım Bezirci (Alrmizan, 2019). With the 1982 Constitution, the National Security Council consisted of the top military generals. The pressure from the generals mentioned above caused the media to lose its basic function of informing the public. The changes made in the labor agreements and strike laws, as well as the interventions to the unions, significantly weakened the journalists and the press. However, after 1982, with the passing of the new law, the number of union members declined by 75 percent (Yeşil, 2016).

When Turgut Özal came into power in general elections held in 1983, which also marked the beginning of Turkey's transition to a liberal economy, the press was mostly owned by family businesses, such as the Simavi Family of Hürriyet, the

Karacan family of Milliyet, and the Nadi family of Cumhuriyet. However, the press became more commercialized as companies like Dogan took over the industry.

Şalom was also influenced by the changes taking place in the media industry. Though originally published as four pages in Ladino with only one corner in Turkish, Şalom changed its predominant language to Turkish in 1984 following the reorganization of the editorial board, which consisted mostly of young adults. The newspaper aimed to appeal to younger generations who spoke no Ladino and had no intention of learning it.

Figure 3: Şalom, May 7, 1980



“La eleksion del prezidente de la Republika” The election of the president of the Republic) headline in Figure 7 reports the news as far as the election of the presidency is concerned. Again, the news on the national agenda is given priority on the front cover, with Şalom continuing to spare a smaller place for the news about the Turkish-Jewish minority: "Nuvelas de la komunita," which means the news of the community occupies only two columns.

**Figure 4:** Şalom, November 4, 1970, Headline: “The Advantage is Ours”



One of those front covers in Figure 8 bears the headline "The Advantage is Ours" to show Şalom's concern that the conflict between Turkey and Russia will likely erupt. Şalom underlines that if the Turkish ambassadors take the actions they are supposed to take, the most favorable result will be obtained soon. The news discursively maintains a dialogue-based approach with a focus on possible solutions that might resolve the conflict between the two countries. Egypt and Cyprus are among the other countries abroad that Şalom regularly reported on.

**Figure 5:** Şalom, June 13, 1990, Headline: “Award from Spain to Sephardic Jews Worldwide”.



Another example comes from Spain in Figure 9 with the headline of "Award from Spain to Sephardic Jews worldwide." This refers to Spanish authorities' recognition of Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in 1492. Rather than criticizing Spanish authorities for expelling Jews from the country more than 500 years ago, Şalom applauds the contributions of Sephardic Jews. Russia, Canada, and Israel are among the other countries that Şalom reports on. On the other hand, the newspaper keeps silent about the events concerning the Turkish-Jewish minority.

**Figure 6:** Şalom, June 15, 1950, Headline: “Farewell, Hapoel”



“Farewell Hapoel.” Hapoel, the National Israeli Team, leaves Turkey after spending 15 days there. The news is significant as it underlines the collaboration between the countries in the sports field, and Şalom underlines the event to express the continuous hope that a peaceful atmosphere will be established between the two countries. In addition, Egypt and Jordan are among the countries abroad that Şalom reports on.

Throughout these 45 years, Turkish Jews experienced various significant events such as the events of 6-7 September and the establishment of the State of Israel. They

saw their community contract as many migrated to different countries. In the meantime, Turkey also went through major changes.

### **3.2. EMPHASIS ON TURKISH CITIZENSHIP (1992 – 2003)**

During the period from Turkish Jews' celebration of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Sephardic Jews to the Ottoman Empire in 1992 to the terrorist attacks at the Neve Shalom and Beth Israel Synagogues in Istanbul in 2003, which directly targeted the Turkish-Jewish minority, it was observed that the front pages of *Şalom* prioritized the news emphasizing the Turkish citizenship of the Jewish community living in Turkey since arriving in Anatolia 500 years earlier. As Molinas pointed out, Bensiyon Pinto's administration as Honorary President of the Turkish-Jewish minority beginning in 1989 saw a change of strategy regarding issues carried out in the public sphere. The introversion arising from the past historical traumas shifted towards not interfering with government business, not being too loud in expressing minority complaints but keeping the minority views behind closed doors. (Molinas, personal interview, October 1, 2020). Molinas further argued that in line with the close relationship of the community representatives with the government, *Şalom* emphasized the Turkish-Jewish identity through the front-page news, such as the celebration of the foundation of the quincentennial anniversary of the arrival of Jews to Anatolia.

In the 1990s, the world entered a new media age. The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the world became unipolar, and a new period of wars began. This period was remarkable for the neoliberalism affecting the mainstream media in favor of the entertainment news. *Şalom*, both as an important product and driver of the Turkish-Jewish identity, positioned itself accordingly. It began to communicate using language aligned with the increased emphasis on Turkish citizenship, citizenship defined by living and dying in this land; describing military service as national service, not to be escaped and expressing this commitment as not being a traitor, fighting at the front for the Ottoman Empire and Turkey for generations; plus paying taxes on top of all kinds of civic duties (Gülsoy, 2012).

The news in Şalom during this period demonstrated a balanced coverage of events outside and inside the Turkish-Jewish community with an expression of goodwill for the country to get along well with its neighbors. The priority of the news was given to internal events. The language of the newspaper has completely changed from Ladino to Turkish. Ladino, the mother tongue of the Turkish-Jewish community, did not take place on the front pages anymore but only appeared in some articles.

In the 2000s, the front-page news emphasized Turkish citizenship and the authors from outside the minority started writing in Şalom. There was also an intention of increasing the readership to make the newspaper more appealing to a larger group. This intention, as pointed out by İvo Molinos, was a reflection of Şalom claiming an identity not only as a minority newspaper but also as a newspaper read by the majority of the population.

The 1990s witnessed the monopolization of the press, the prioritization of corporate strategies, the initiatives that maximized profits, the weakening of press unions, and the increase of infotainment, a type of soft news that combines entertainment and information (Yeşil, 2016). It was also a time when Şalom turned into full color after 1992 continuing its efforts to look more attractive for younger generations.

In an atmosphere where danger was both consciously and unconsciously internalized, there was no room for the opposing voice of any minorities, considering their already vulnerable positions within society. At the time, Şalom, as a Turkish-Jewish minority, reported with a more accepting and silent tone in a way that would not "cause any more trouble" to protect itself and its community. In other words, the emphasis on Turkish citizenship has continued in Şalom because through it Turkish Jews acknowledged their common history and because it provided them with a sense of safety from all possible attacks and murders.

The traces of Jewish presence in Istanbul stretches back to the fifth century BC. Jewish settlements existed in various locations of Istanbul during the Byzantine era and, later, during the Ottoman period (Gülsoy, 2018). A vast majority of the Jewish population expelled from the Iberian Peninsula had taken refuge in the Ottoman Empire, and those who settled in Istanbul had preferred to live alongside the shores of the Bosphorus (Gülsoy 2018). "Beginning from the second half of the 19th century, the Ottoman bureaucracy underwent a great transformation concerning the ethnic and religious characteristics of its employees (Aktar, 2009). The numbers provided by Carter Findley based on the employment records of the Ottoman Foreign Ministry for 1850-1908 prove that minorities comprised around one-third of (29%) of all officials (Findley 1982). Aktar argues that, despite the unfavorable effects of the nationalist movements amongst the minorities in the late Ottoman Empire, it is quite clear that equal opportunity in terms of state employment was achieved in the Ottoman Foreign Ministry. Even during the 33-year reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, minorities were allowed to rise within the ranks of the Ottoman bureaucracy (Yıldız, 1999).

The most important role of the Quincentennial foundation was to emphasize Jews in Turkey. However, few had never considered themselves a minority, and they believed that it was about time to announce it to the entire world ("500. Yıl Vakfı", 2015). The fact that the Lausanne Treaty defined the Turkish-Jewish identity was underlined again during this period. *Nokta*, a leading Turkish weekly political news magazine with a liberal and progressive stance, recognized the foundation as the Most Successful Institution of the Year 1991. *Nokta* was one of the highest-circulation weekly papers in Turkey, with 32,000 readers at the time

The headline of *Şalom* of December 25, 1991 (Figure 11) reads, "Founded in 1989 by more than 100 Jewish and Muslim businessmen, journalists, politicians, lawyers, scientists and artists and whose aim is to announce the humanitarian qualities of Turks who have embraced Jews for five centuries, the Quincentennial Foundation

was named the most successful institution of 1991 at the award ceremony, "Doruktakiler 91", organized by *Nokta* magazine.

**Figure 7:** *Şalom*, December 25, 1991; headline, “The Quincentennial Foundation is at the Top”



The Quincentennial Foundation also organized a series of events in 1992. The event program was reported on the front page of *Şalom*. This showed that due to the waves of change and the community's growth, Turkish Jews expressed themselves in a manner that emphasized their Turkishness. They acknowledged their long history on Anatolian soil and wanted to communicate how happy they were living in Turkey. With this acknowledgment, they saw their community as a part of Turkish history and nationality.

Figure 8: Şalom, March 11, 1992; headline, “The 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Peaceful Togetherness”



During this period, the media moved from the central Babiali neighborhood in Istanbul to the media towers built in İkitelli, far away from the city center. This move symbolized the transformation of the Turkish press, representing the increasing distance between the press and the public. The industry became much more vulnerable to pressures from the government, which "led to a loss of editorial independence and decline in journalistic professionalism and increase in partisanship" (Yeşil, 2016). Neoliberalism, for instance, has been a dominant principle since the 1980s. Its effects on deteriorating social systems, media performance and democratic futures constitute a doctrine that profits should rule as much of social life as possible and anything that gets in the way of making a profit is suspect, if not condemned (McChesney, 2008).

Waves of neoliberalism have threatened minority media existence. In the scope of the development plans introduced by the government, reduced taxes and low-interest loans, which explain the large conglomerates' interest in the media, have been put into action. Between 1990 and 1993, incentives worth more than 3 trillion TL were given to Sabah, Milliyet, and Hürriyet, which had the biggest influence on public opinion (Öngen, 2017). The highly concentrated press structure left little room for small, independent ventures to survive (Yeşil, 2016). With the incentives given to mainstream newspapers and the resulting monopolization, the opportunity gap between the mainstream and minority media has dramatically increased. Şalom and all other minority newspapers needed even more community support to survive during and after this period. Having witnessed the rise and dominance of this neoliberalism in every aspect of public life, Şalom placed more emphasis on profit, trying to increase its readership by changing the format. Though the size of the captions remained the same, the use of visuals on the front page increased in number so that the newspaper would be more likely to attract attention.

The mainstream media and their owners supported the military intervention, and "later it became common knowledge that the military was closely watching and sometimes interfering with print, broadcast and online media in the name of protecting the secular republic" (Akser and Baybars-Hawks, 2012). During all military interventions in the history of Turkey, mainstream media was under surveillance; meanwhile, minority media was not feeling safe either and had to be careful once again to avoid significant intervention from the military and the government. This was the case with Şalom.

1997 also marked the 50th anniversary of Şalom, and it was celebrated with consecutive events from October 1 until December 6, 1997. Celebrations began with an international cartoon exhibition on discrimination, and a photography contest called "Cultural Values of the Contemporary Turkish Jews" followed. The newspaper made

both the exhibition and the contest open to the public, which can be seen as a reflection of positioning not as a minority but as Turkish-Jewish citizens.

**Figure 9:** Şalom, October 28, 1998; headline, “The 75th Year of the Republic”



The 75th anniversary of the Republic was also celebrated in 1998 within the Turkish-Jewish minority with the opening of an exhibition organized by Şalom, titled "Turkish-Jewish Press and Turkish-Jewish Publications in the Republic Period. Thus, the "The Turkish-Jewish press and the Turkish-Jewish publications in the Republic Period" exhibition was also a tool for Turkish Jews to redefine, reclaim, and underline their identity as Turkish. The news regarding the celebrations was covered in the newspaper as well. Although Turkish Jews kept silent in uncertain times, with the initiative of the Quincentennial Foundation and the community presidency, they organized events, such as the European Day of Jewish heritage and culture, introducing Turkish Jews to the world. With various events and following exhibitions during this period, Şalom positioned itself as an important part of the community's ongoing claim for Turkish identity.

The millennium started with big celebrations worldwide and in Turkey, which officially had been a candidate for the EU on December 12, 1999, but the positive and hopeful spirit was soon lost. On September 11, 2001, four coordinated terrorist attacks causing the death of almost 3000 people in the United States completely changed both domestic and international policies on a global scale (Morgan, 2009). Terror became a daily topic for the world. During this period, Şalom columnists drew their readers' attention to these global issues. Thus, the newspaper also began to draw attention from the general public. In other words, Şalom has become much more visible to the public and started commenting more clearly on current topics and ongoing concerns.

The front covers of the period that started in 1991 with the opening of the Quincentennial Foundation by Jak Kamhi is when Şalom emphasizes Turkish Citizenship. The front cover of figure 7 with the headline "The 500th anniversary of peaceful togetherness," and the front cover of figure 6 with the headline "The Quincentennial Foundation at the Top" make explicit the determination of the newspaper for peace establishment to be possible. In addition, the front covers No.9 put forward the celebration for the 75th Year of the Foundation of the Turkish Republic, shedding light on the sensitivity of Şalom for the country's political agenda as its social responsibility. Figure No. 19, with the headline "Çankaya opened for Mansions," is another example of the social responsibility of Şalom. Furthermore, the newspaper straight forwards various people who spend efforts on "living together in Peace" building efforts today as well as in history: The front cover on No. 13 with the headline "Özal: I hope that a permanent and just solution will be found in Middle East this year" and the front cover on figure 15 with the headline "One of our Honest Ones: Selahattin Ülkümen" as well as the front cover on figure 14 with the Headline: "Hanukkah Celebration by A. Necdet Sezer" are examples of those front covers where Turgut Özal, the former prime minister of the period, A. Necdet Sezer, the President of the period and Selahattin Ülkümen the former Rhodes ambassador in 1943-1944 during Second World War.

**Figure 10:** Şalom, February 9, 1994; headline, “Peace and Tolerance Conference Held in Istanbul”



**Figure 11:** Şalom, December 18, 1991; headline, “Dr. Uri Gordon the Guest of the Rotary Club of the Islands”



**Figure 12: Şalom, November 27, 1991;** headline, “Özal: I hope that a permanent and just solution will be found in the Middle East in this year, which celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Jews' arrival in Turkish lands”



**Figure 13: Şalom, December 12, 2001;** headline, “Hanukkah Celebration by A. Necdet Sezer”



**Figure 14:** Şalom, July 11, 1990; headline, “One of Our Honest Ones: Selahattin Ülkümen”



**Figure 16:** Şalom, November 13, 2002; headline, “Let’s Keep the Doors of the West Open to Turkey”

**Figure 15:** Şalom, September 13, 2000; headline, “We Made a Friend”



**Figure 17: Şalom Headline:**  
 “Life Begins in an Israeli Village”



**Figure 18: Şalom Headline:**  
 “Çankaya Mansion Opened for Receptions”



### 3.3. UNDER THE SIEGE AND SURVEILLANCE (2003 – 2010)

This section covers the period between 2003 and 2010, starting with the terrorist attacks at the Neve Shalom Synagogue and the Beth Israel Synagogue in Istanbul, directly targeting the Turkish-Jewish community, and ending with the Mavi Marmara incident, a military operation by Israel against civilian ships of the Gaza flotilla in the Mediterranean. This was also the period when Ivo Molinas became the editor-in-chief of Şalom. As he pointed out in the interviews, he considers Şalom as the newspaper of the Jewish community. However, he aims to publish a newspaper that appeals to Turkish-Jewish readers and Turkish society in general. He insists on creating a newspaper read by Jewish people and a source of accurate and objective news for

everyone regardless of their religion. Thus, he tried to develop strategies promoting Şalom as a national newspaper rather than a minority newspaper.

During this period, the distribution of news on the front page has changed, with almost half the content dedicated to internal news. After the 2000s, Turkey entered a critical period of political change, becoming an increasingly conservative Muslim country. During the period between 2003 to 2010, the newspaper's criticism has almost always been directed at war, discrimination, and political problems between Turkey and Israel but never against the Turkish government.

**Figure 19:** Şalom, 8 January 2003; headline, “The New Year Begins with Blood”



Although no terrorist attacks had occurred for over one year, 23 people were killed after two suicide attacks in Israel on January 4, 2003. The attacks took place in a bus terminal. Even though the news was written with smaller letters than the main Headline, the newspaper started announcing that terror still exists.

On November 15, 2003, terrorist attacks were launched against the Neve Shalom Synagogue and the Beth Israel Synagogue in Istanbul during Saturday morning prayers. As a result of these attacks, twenty-four people, six Jewish citizens, died, and 303 people were injured (Levi, 2007). These attacks and the subsequent terrorist attacks on HSBC Bank and the British Consulate greatly worried the Turkish-Jewish minority. Due to these consecutive attacks, the assassination of Yasef Yahya, a young Turkish-Jewish dentist, and the emergence of powerful racist and antisemitic sentiments in the country, the Turkish-Jewish minority felt besieged by an unknown danger and became anxious. The writers did not refrain from expressing their objection to the anti-Semitic events that have continued since the Turkish-Jewish minority settled in Anatolia. They chose to shed light on the continuity of those events in Turkey and worldwide, regardless of the specific place the incident occurred. The continuity of muted criticism is significant in this period.

The repercussions of this period are undoubtedly reflected in the media of the period as *Şalom* refrained from covering these issues that pushed the minority to withdraw. The covers of *Şalom* included lighter news of particular importance for Jews, such as the opening of the community's OrAhayim Hospital. The main events in world news were also reflected in the headlines. Culture, arts, and sports were given little space on the covers besides referrals to the internal pages. Since Turkish Jews felt under siege, although *Şalom's* communication style has changed and taken a more assertive tone, no direct criticism of the Turkish government was expressed.

In 2004, Hrant Dink, the founder and editor-in-chief of *Agos*, a weekly Armenian newspaper, wrote an article where he suggested that Armenians should make the distinction between their Turkish and Armenian identities in order for the latter to be emancipated (Yanardağoğlu, 2013). On the ground of the article, *Agos* and Hrant Dink had become open targets and victims of the same xenophobia they were trying to eliminate. On January 19, 2006, Hrant Dink was murdered. He was known for advocating minority rights, and he "was the first minority person in the country to

criticize the Turkish state politically in the public realm" (Dönmez, 2008). The actual murderer was sentenced to 22 years, two others were given 12 years in prison, and 16 other defendants were acquitted of the charge of being members of a terrorist organization" (Yanardağoğlu, 2013). The assassination was significant as it underlines the xenophobia entrenched in Turkish society and its reactions against non-Muslim communities.

On January 29, 2009, in Davos, Switzerland, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan walked off the stage after an angry exchange with the Israeli President, Shimon Peres, during a panel discussion on Gaza at the World Economic Forum on Thursday, as a result of Mr. David Ignatius – moderator and columnist the Washington Post – efforts to end the panel which was restricted to one hour, Erdoğan, whose words were cut short, left the panel. He expressed his viewpoints in a press conference after the panel and criticized Mr. Ignatius for his lack of capacity to direct a balanced and impartial panel.

The deterioration in freedom of the press started in 2008 with the Ergenekon trials, in which hundreds of journalists, lawmakers, and military officers were accused of being in a secret organization to bring down the government and the government's Union of Kurdistan Communities (KCK) operations following it (Rainsford, 2008). The accusations included planning to assassinate public figures and financing terrorists by selling chemical weapons. On the other hand, the KCK operations targeted Kurdish journalists. They accused them of helping to promote terrorist propaganda or being a member of a terrorist organization (Resource Centre on Media Freedom in Europe, 2019).

Şalom has already taken on a silent and mostly passive communication style that gave no place for any opposition against the Turkish government to protect and preserve the Turkish-Jewish identity.

As of 2008, AKP started to take subtle actions to silence critical voices in the media. Doğan group was forced to pay a \$3.5 billion fine, which nearly equaled the total value of its assets (Yeşil, 2014), and had to sell off two of its newspapers, Hürriyet and Milliyet, to the pro-government Demirören Group. The journalists who were unwilling to comply with the practices of the new owners were fired (Weise, 2018). "The prime minister openly challenged the editorial policies of the media organizations that do not support the AKP government and called on the public "not to read" such newspapers and began "polishing up" the media groups that supported the

The front cover with the headline "Cooperation of War against Terror" is quite significant as it can be considered a call for getting united against Terrorism. Underlying the cooperation Şalom subtly criticizes this terrorism. Another example comes from Israel, which fights terrorism non-stop: "The New Year Started with Blood" is the front cover of the newspaper for underlying the fact that terrorism exists everywhere as well as the front cover of Figure No. 26, headlined "Tension Everywhere."

On the other hand, the newspaper has drawn attention to the fact that awareness is rising against terrorism and countries' sensibilities are increasing. Meanwhile, the Headline "Holocaust sensibility from Turkey" exemplifies the abovementioned awareness. The efforts spent by people, although from different backgrounds, are also underlined by Şalom. This is seen in the front cover of figure 25 with the headline, "School by Israeli Businessman to Çorlu"; the front page of figure 24 with the headline, "An example of Humanity from Turkish Ambassador"; the front page of figure 23 with the headline, "Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipni Livni: Our Goal is Finding a Solution" and the front page of figure 22 with the headline, "Chief Rabbi Rav İsak Haleva: We are peaceful here." By putting these efforts forward, Şalom underlines its determination to continue spending efforts for peacebuilding activities and social responsibility for every human being.

Considering the political climate and events concerning Turkish Jews in Israel, we can see that the tone of Şalom has changed to become more assertive, yet still holds the tension down. In a country becoming increasingly conservative, it is important to keep the criticism subtle and positive, now more than ever. Drawing attention to Jewish philanthropists like Isak Pinhas and statements of the Chief Rabbi surely underlines the Turkish identity of Jews.

**Figure 20:** Şalom, December 31, 2003; headline, “Cooperation in the War Against Terror”



**Figure 21:** Şalom, January 7, 2004; headline, “Chief Rabbi Rav Isak Haleva: ‘We are Peaceful in Turkey’”



**Figure 22:** Şalom, May 31, 2006; headline, “Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipni Livni in Turkey for a Two-Day Visit. Livni: Our goal is finding a solution”



**Figure 23:** Şalom, March 8, 2007; headline, “An Example of Humanity from the Turkish Ambassador”



**Figure 24:** Şalom, December 24, 2006; headline, “School by Israeli Businessman in Çorlu”



**Figure 25:** Şalom, January 13, 2010; headline, “Tension Again”



**Figure 26:** Şalom, December 29, 2010; headline, “Holocaust Sensibility from Turkey”



### 3.4. MAINTAINING TURKISH-JEWISH IDENTITY (2010 – 2016)

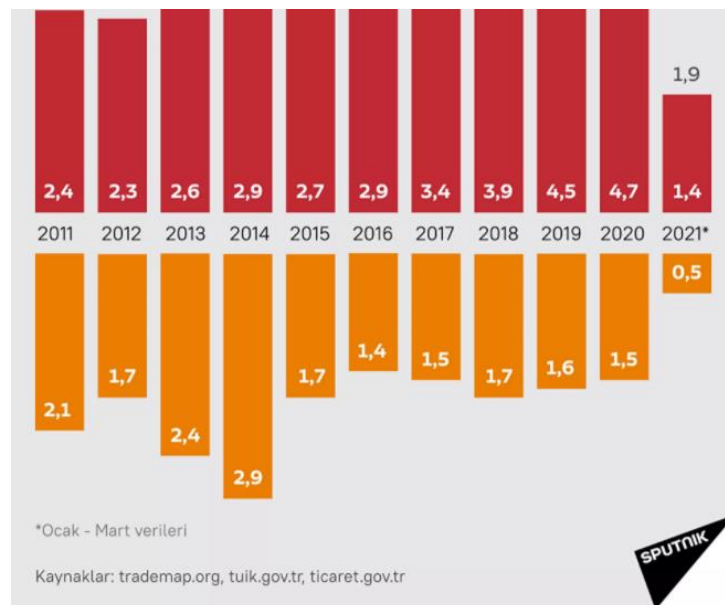
This section covers the period from the Mavi Marmara incident in 2010 to the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016. At this period, we can see that the criticism is still subtle, but the tone and the tools have changed. As a result of extreme internal and external events and heightened antisemitism towards the Turkish-Jewish minority, Şalom drew attention to the prejudice against Jews, continuing to offer subtle criticism. To overcome prejudice against the Turkish-Jewish minority, Şalom put forward the cultural heritage and Judaic values. For this reason, I titled the years between 2010-2016 as the period of "Maintaining Turkish-Jewish Identity."

While the priority on internal news continued during this period, the news from Israel significantly increased. The language of the newspaper had become completely Turkish in the previous decade, and it has continued to be published in Turkish.

Turkey entered a critical period of political change in the previous decade and has become an increasingly conservative Muslim country. One of the most important determinants of the relationship between Turkey and the Turkish Jews was the Mavi Marmara incident. As broadcasted by BBC News in 2016, in May 2010, a six-ship flotilla set sail for the Gaza Strip to deliver humanitarian aid. The ships carried 10,000 tons of goods, including school supplies, building materials, and two large electricity generators. It was organized by Gaza Movement, an umbrella organization for activists from numerous countries, and a Turkish group called the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Aid (IHH). About 700 activists from 38 countries participated in the expedition (Migdalovitz, 2010). Mavi Marmara resisted, and commandos landed on the ship by descending on ropes from helicopters (Migdalovitz, 2010).

Although the flotilla incident caused a political crisis between Turkey and Israel, the trade between the two countries continued because they have continued their commercial relationships in an increasing amount.

**Figure 27:** Trade Amount Between Turkey and Israel 2011-2021



Şalom started a new continuum by reporting news concerning media conferences, opening the "Jewish Clothing in the Ottoman Era" exhibition, and organizing European Day of Jewish Culture events.

Although the publication language and the existence of Rozental's cartoon corner were the same, the main difference was in the authors. The publication introduced authors from Turkish society from 2010, who made up 38% of all authors.

Those authors have chosen universal topics such as philosophy, arts, cinema, the history of humanity, and Jews worldwide. The aim has been to increase the readers of the Şalom newspaper, as the authors' environments would certainly differ from the Turkish-Jewish minority. The goal has been to appeal to those environments and the readers within the community.

The authors from outside the Turkish-Jewish minority had a universal perspective and elaborated on their subjects accordingly. Trying not to be over deductive, they generally followed a style with humor as far as the subject permitted. Among various authors, Cüneyt Dirican, a member of the Union of Turkish Banks Centre of Education, writes on the economy; Önder Kaya, a history teacher at Robert College who also writes on history; Bahar Feyzan, journalist and presenter on TV, who writes on contemporary events; Arda Eşberk, actor in the theater who writes on cinema are among the various authors in Şalom.

Meanwhile, Turkey was becoming an increasingly conservative country. The AKP government began to use force more than ever, especially on institutions established by the Kurdish people. Journalistic activities, such as interviews, photos, press statements, notes, and conversations with sources, were included in the indictment as criminal evidence for being a member of a terrorist organization or promoting terrorist propaganda.

Turkish Union of Journalists published a report in 2012 where three major areas were identified to limit the freedom of expression in Turkey: The first being those

limitations such as the Penal Code, Law on Combatting Terrorism and the legislative measures that could conflict with the European Convention on Human Rights and European Court of Human Rights decisions. The second set stems from the legislation that qualifies the working conditions of the journalists. The third set relates to structural problems such as editorial independence.

One of the most significant events in Turkey's history, the Gezi Park movement, started with the protestors who defended Taksim's Gezi Park against the government's urban development plan in 2013.

At this time, the self-censorship of the press and other major news outlets reached its peak. One of the most shocking censorship examples was on CNN Turk. While CNN International was broadcasting the confrontation between the police and protesters, CNN Turk aired a wildlife documentary on penguins (EJN, 2017), becoming a part of the symbols of the Gezi humor. Twitter became the main source of information as the protestors were using it and several social media platforms to broadcast the protests live. Şalom also gave space to the Gezi movement on the front page. However, in line with its focus on the Turkish-Jewish identity, the news was reported in a remarkably objective tone, neither supporting nor opposing the activists nor the government. Even though Gezi was one of the biggest events in Turkey's history, the Jewish community did not seem to have much interest in it and was certainly not taking any sides. Figure 28 The Headline of Şalom: "Turkey fixates on Gezi."

On July 15, 2016, many journalists and media personnel were put behind bars, according to the Platform for Independent Journalism (BBC News Türkçe, 2018), as a result of the coup attempt against the government and President Erdoğan. Press freedom in Turkey has been in freefall since 2014; however, as of the failed coup attempt, "fighting terrorism became the main grounds for interfering in the freedom of expression" (Akdeniz and Altıparmak, 2018). In other words, anyone thought to be in opposition was at the risk of being investigated and accused of spreading terrorist

propaganda or being a member of a terrorist organization (Akdeniz and Altıparmak, 2018).

Turkish Jews have remained relatively silent after the failed coup attempt as a safety measure while holding up their Turkish-Jewish identity. The vulnerable position of the minority due to its size and political power makes it impossible to cope with an accusation of spreading terrorist propaganda. Especially during such times, not raising any voice against the government becomes necessary for minorities and its most important media channel's survival. Thus, by keeping silent, Şalom managed to avoid any interventions from the government during this time.

On the other hand, the coup and the change in the political, economic, and social climate in the country followed, Ivo Molinas, editor-in-chief of Şalom speaks of how the minority has been affected: "Especially after the July 15 coup attempt, young Jews who became hopeless about the future left Turkey. Considering the economic challenges of Turkey, especially families with kids are seriously contemplating leaving, not only to Israel but also to Europe, if they have better financial conditions (Molinas, personal interview, October 1, 2020).

The censorship applied by the government and the self-censorship of the press has become the new norm in the Turkish press. Nevertheless, although the Turkish Republic constrained people to forget their past in the nation-state-building process, the new generations now expend effort to remember, record and reconcile the imagined earlier periods. For this reason, the front pages of Şalom in this period reported turning points in the history of both Jews in the world and Jews in Turkey, points that included the Holocaust, the Struma, and the 2003 synagogue attacks. Şalom has widely covered antisemitic events in the world in its pages. Turkey-Israel relations were also an important part of the paper's news coverage. Arts, culture and sports increasingly claim less cover space.

"The biggest communication problem is the illusion that takes place." As Georges Bernard Shaw states, identifying and expressing the idea without falling into the illusion has been the main concern between the years 2010 and 2016 for the Turkish-Jewish minority.

"Although the intention of the Turkish-Jewish minority has always been to get along with the authorities using an optimistic and supportive tone, in line with their ultimate goal being the transmission of cultural values to the next generations concerning their Turkish-Jewish identities, Şalom continued to spend efforts to shed light on these values as well as those threatening against," says Ivo Molinas, editor-in-chief of Şalom. In the meantime, Şalom continued to underline the period of 2010-2016, distinguishing not only in the way the Turkish Identity was put forward but also in the way the minority reacted against the antisemitic discourse threatening Jews and Judaic cultural values following "getting along well with the authorities" attitude.

Among the various front covers of the period, Figure No. 29, headlined, "Politics Must Be Free From Prejudice," and figure No. 42, headlined, "We Want to Show What Prejudice Can Cause," are significant in terms of the subtle criticism the newspaper shows against prejudice. Underlying the existence of prejudice and the danger it causes, the newspaper sheds light on the necessity of getting rid of prejudice to allow humanity to live together comfortably. On the other hand, Figure No. 31, headlined, "Getting Closer is Necessary" and "Call from Netanyahu to Arab Citizens," as well as Figure No. 34, headlined, "It is Time to Unite," underlines the newspaper's muted criticism of the fact that as long as hostility exists between different groups, a positive atmosphere is hard to achieve.

In general, during the four periods that Şalom went through, we can see that the overall approach was to get along well with the government, embracing Turkish citizenship while maintaining Turkish-Jewish identity and staying loyal to the Judaic culture. The change in news distribution and the switch from Ladino to Turkish can be interpreted as part of the newspaper's determination and responsibility to provide a safe

space for the Turkish-Jewish minority. For a long time, Şalom has been the only media outlet that Turkish Jews can find a proper representation of themselves. It became the voice of a minority in the country, allowing them to connect with their people outside of Turkey.

**Figure 28:** Şalom, June 12, 2013; headline, “Turkey Fixates on Gezi”



**Figure 29:** Şalom, December 2013; headline, “Political Will Must be Free from Prejudice” is the news that takes place under the headline “The Biggest Enemy, Not Only for Jews but for Humanity”



**Figure 30:** Şalom, June 4, 2006; headline, “All Jews Targeted in Criticisms Against Israel”



**Figure 31:** Şalom, January 8, 2016; headline, “Getting Closer is Necessary” and “Call from Netanyahu to Arabian Citizens”



**Figure 32:** Şalom, January 2016; headline, “Israel is the Foreign Threat No. 1”



**Figure 33:** Şalom, December 2016; headline, “Antisemitism in the Press is on the USA Religious Freedom Report”



**Figure 34: Şalom, January 2017; headline, “It’s Time to Unite”**



**Figure 35: Şalom, December 2017; headline, “Open and Undercover Antisemitism is a Serious Problem in Turkey”**



**Figure 36:** Şalom, December 2012; headline: “Big Reaction to the Wrong Target”



**Figure 37:** Şalom, June 2012; headline, “Izmir's Historic Synagogue to be Turned into a Museum”



**Figure 38:** Şalom, December 5, 2012; headline, “A Horrible Antisemitism”



**Figure 39:** Şalom, September 2014; headline, “Holocaust Education in Turkey”



Figure 40: Şalom, January 2014; headline, “We Want to Show What Prejudice Can Cause”



As the front covers above make explicit, during the period that started in 2010 with the Mavi Marmara flotilla incident and ended with the failed coup attempt, Şalom reports the news related to the Turkish Jewish minority and spares bigger space for those on the front cover. The change is significant as the way the news is reported the maintaining Turkish-Jewish identity attitude where the values and traditions that both identities are based on are held within a balance in equilibrium.

#### **4. ANALYSIS OF ŞALOM THROUGH THE EDITORIAL CARTOONS OF TÜNELİN UCU BY İZEL ROZENTAL**

Editorial cartoons constitute a space to provoke discussion and critique over political and social issues. Exaggeration is one; a cartoon often exaggerates the subject's appearance. A cartoon usually exaggerates to set the subject apart from others which make the second idea individuation. These elements lead to a quick and very conventional definition: a cartoon is a symbol that emphasizes the distinctive qualities of its subject. In that sense, a cartoon can be considered as art aiming to underline not only the distinctive qualities of the latter but also those that differentiate the subject from other subjects in the cartoons. the argument of how the cartoon and the caricaturist should be perceived solely relies on the specific circumstances that they represent. I argue on the groundwork of Izel Rozental, based on the relationship between the cartoon and the cartoonist. Noting that his work falls under the editorial cartoon category, a further definition of the distinguishment of types of caricatures is necessary. The political caricature is generally believed to refer to the ridiculing, discrediting, or exposing of individuals, groups, and organizations involved in social power struggles (Strecher,1967).

On the other hand, the editorial cartoon that Izel Rozental has created echoes the Turkish-Jewish minority in Turkey, as he has been creating his cartoon in accordance with the political agenda of the country as well as the universal values in general.

The weekly “Tünelin Ucu”, the editorial cartoon by İzel Rozental was first published in Şalom in 1991 as Rozental reflected on his personal history at Şalom:

With the change in the editorials, the staff working in Şalom wanted to do something to improve the newspaper. The idea of editorial cartoon emerged as a part of these efforts. A friend of mine on the editorial board recommended me as an editorial cartoonist. I gave him a sample of my work. Thus, the newspaper started the editorial corner of “Tünelin Ucu” from İzel community newspaper, I liked to see my own drawing on the first page of the newspaper. (Rozental, personal interview July 7, 2020).

In explaining the the selection of the title of the editorial cartoon as Tünelin Ucu, Rozental refers to the dialogic relationship between the pessimism of the cartoonist and the hope that should be carried through the cartoons:

The caricaturist is a pessimist who criticizes but also carries hopes to see the light at the end of the tunnel. If that light is not visible, writing or drawing does not constitute any meaning. That is the reason why I chose to title my corner as ‘the end of the tunnel’ (Rozental, personal interview, May 30, 2022).

Although the newspaper’s editorial cartoonist interprets current events through the filter of her own experience and conscience, the editorial process and the editorial cartoonist are assumed to work cooperatively. İzel Rozental, the editorial cartoonist of Şalom since 1991, works cooperatively with Ivo Molinas, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper. The artist states that they always come to a mutual understanding, and he is happy to work in the newspaper in that sense (Rozental, personal interview, September 10, 2019) As an anarchist, as he defines himself, it is important for İzel Rozental to work cooperatively with the editorial staff.

I always had a good relationship with Ivo. He was the foreign news director when I started drawing for Şalom. The moment I was in trouble he would come into play. He would show up, he would solve my problems, and he was the editorial director. For example, he would call me at two in the morning to ask what I meant in this or that cartoon. I was a little stubborn, and I would put pressure on him to publish it (Rozental, personal interview, October 1, 2019).

After a while, İzel Rozental was faced with suggestions to draw these "strange" cartoons somewhere else as Şalom does not need them. Then, he tries to hide and starts drawing fish, turning his caricatures into fish, feeling like Plantu, the caricaturist in “Le Monde” who is having the same problem there. The only difference is that Plantu makes his little mouse speak whereas he makes his fish speak. Although it is difficult for the caricaturist to decide whether to stay or leave, he ends up staying in the newspaper. “Readers wanted me to leave and suggested I

draw these "strange" cartoons somewhere else, Şalom does not need them! So, I tried to hide. I drew fish, of course. I turned my caricatures into fish. I am like Plantu, who is having the same problem in Le Monde. He makes his little mouse speak; I made fish speak! There was a time when I said, I am leaving. Then I completely changed my concept, I was not drawing editorial content at all. Then I found the fish” (Rozental, personal interview July 7, 2020). The artist works hard to try to find alternative ways of expression in order not to refrain from taking a step back. He rather continues to express his viewpoints using metaphors to make himself clear as has been the case in the fish example. The example is significant in the sense that the animal which does not speak is used for the people who are either not allowed to speak or prefer to stay silent.

Creative expression must be defined to fully explain the concept of artistic interpretations as a form of positive resistance. (Purnomo, 2020). Creativity placed in an artistic expression as an act of opposition can be given as an example of covert criticism, as has been the case in Rozental’s cartoons.

Izel Rozental<sup>1</sup> was born on March 2, 1951, in Istanbul. His parents were from very different cultures, his mother was Sephardic, and his father was Ashkenazi. When he was 13 years old, his parents separated and their houses were divided, so he took turns staying with each.

“I was staying here in the Ashkenazi households, and there in the Sephardic households and switching cultures to a large extent” (Rozental, personal interview, October 20, 2019).

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<sup>1</sup> [1] Rozental published seven cartoon collections, “Karikatör”, “Aquarium” (Akvaryum), “1991”, and “What Will Happen to this World?” (Ne Olacak Bu Dünyanın Hali?), “Despite Everything” (Herşeye Rağmen), “Okay but Why?” (Peki ama neden?), and “non-Comics!”. In addition to his cartoon albums, Rozental has collected his various stories, written in a humorous way, in seven different books: “En Route: Traveling the World with a Humorist” (Seyir Hali: Bir Mizahçıyla Dünyayı Gezmek), “Moda, My Lover” (Moda Sevgilim), “Attention Buda! The Far East with the View of a Cartoonist” (Dikkat Buda! Karikatörcü Gözüyle Uzakdoğu), “B”, “F”, and “Along the Road” (Yol Boyunca).

Ashkenazi is the word used for the descendants of Noah in the Hebrew Bible. The word was later associated with Germany and Northern Europe from the 11th century onwards. Sephardic, also known as Sephardim, originated traditionally from the Iberian Peninsula, Spain and Portugal. Expelled from the Iberian Peninsula in the 15th century, Sephardic Jews carried a distinctive Jewish identity with them to North Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt; South-Eastern and Southern Europe, including France, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, and North Macedonia; Western Asia, including Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Iran; as well as the Americas (although in smaller numbers compared to the Ashkenazi Jewish diaspora); and all other places of their exiled settlement.

I grew up in a very secular family and environment. I never had Jewish friends; I had Muslim, Armenian and Greek friends. My mother and father were from very different cultures, my mother was Sephardic, and my father was Ashkenazi. When I was 13 years old, my parents separated and their houses were divided, so I took turns staying with each. I was staying here in the Ashkenazi households, and there in the Sephardic households and switching cultures to a large extent. So, my parents managed to make me an introverted child. I was not social, I have never been social and have even been called asocial, at times, but I also competed in debates, I did theatre, and I went on stage a lot. Maybe I was doing this because I love to show myself, but at the same time I was introverted” (Rozental, personal interview, October 20, 2019).

Switching both Ashkenazi and Sephardic cultures, İzel Rozental began publishing his amateur cartoons in youth and humor magazines when he was only in his twenties. After he was married, influenced by his wife, who is a bridge player and a champion, Rozental developed a fond interest in bridges and became an avid bridge player. The bridge cartoons he drew were published in Elena Jeronimidis' book, *The Joy of Bridge*, in 1984. In 1995, he became the Captain of the National Women's Bridge Team of Turkey in the 42nd European Championship held in Portugal.

“Accompanying his wife in tournaments marks the start of his career: He says that his wife was, a national team bridge player and the consecutive champion and was a very good player and he used to support her while bridging championship tournaments that take 10-15 days, like the Olympics. As a result of the fact that his drawings were published in the magazine called "İş Dünyası," he was able to outreach the boundaries and appeal to people abroad such as French people who liked his drawings and publish them in a magazine called French Reporters Sans Frontiers. The Americans also liked his drawings and they become popular in America. Then they went to England, where the book was published: In both bridge problems and İzel Rozental cartoons. In other words, Bridge has been the tool to make the artist popular around the World.

Rozental also regularly published cartoons and comic strips on the bridge in France, the United States, and the United Kingdom between 1996 and 2000. In 1999, he led the establishment of the Schneider Temple Centre for the Arts in Istanbul. As of today in 2022, he is currently the director of this center and the chair of the Dr Markus Culture and Arts Association. He often presents papers at various international cartoon symposiums, and he is a member of the Cartooning for Peace Foundation founded by Jean Plantureux, the illustrator of *Le Monde*. As part of the Foundation, he has taken part in joint exhibitions held in countries such as Israel, Palestine, France, and New Zealand and has given conferences.

A traveller full of curiosity, İzel Rozental visited a lot of countries and numerous capital cities — Athens, Cape Town, Delhi, Havana, Helsinki, Nice, Paris, San Fransisco, Wellington, Kyoto...etc. He takes pictures of the places he visited, as most travelers do. As he pointed out in the interviews, he takes notes in relation to the experiences he has while visiting those places to create platforms for the exhibitions he prepares after the visits. Furthermore, he is inspired by these experiences in his cartoons also reinforcing the curiosity of the artist. In other words, the cartoons are inspired by the never-ending curiosity of the artist while the artist is being inspired by the cartoon — a bidirectional process.

Between 2004 and 2006, he wrote editorials for the journal *Güldiken* Humor Magazine, published by Turgut Ceviker, who is a Turkish researcher and author. İzel Rozental feels that the best compliment he has ever received came from Turgut Çeviker: “Fifteen or twenty years ago he said, “İzel you have reached the point where I recognize your lines as soon as I see them. “This was a nice compliment for me. Readers, now, recognize my line, my shapes, my typing” (Rozental, personal interview, October 20, 2019).

Tan Oral, a prominent cartoonist and the Head of the Union of Artists since 1971, says that İzel Rozental’s cartoons differ greatly from his contemporaries. He further points out that Rozental successfully takes on a global perspective in his drawings, which enables him to go beyond the constrictions of the editorial team and bring a clearly observant approach to a variety of issues. For Oral, Rozental distinguishes himself with his unique drawing style. “Although Rozental’s drawings may seem to be careless and sloppy at first sight, this sloppy appearance stems from the fact that the drawings aim to focus the reader’s attention on the message rather than the cartoon” (Oral, 1993). I believe that as a result of his unique approach, he expects the reader to see the unseen, to comment on the new reality h/she is faced with and evaluate it objectively independent of what is imposed on the individual. As a result, the reader is enabled to resurrect a new reality that is beyond the boundaries of the political, social and economic agenda of both the time and the place where the focus of the cartoon takes place.

Aykut Köksal, a writer, a curator, and an associate of an independent radio station called Açık Radyo that was founded by Ömer Madra, believes that Rozental is able to look at wars, conflicts, discrimination, disasters, misery, and brutality from an advantageous point that allows him to offer a unique point of view through his cartoons (Köksal, 1991). As such, his collective works offer almost a catalogue of the social and political history of the last two and a half decades (Köksal, 1996).

Semih Balcıoğlu, a renowned Turkish cartoonist, describes İzel Rozental as a “cartoon maniac” and a prolific artist who has numerous interests and occupations (Hızlan, 2021). His numberless interests and occupations have enriched this work

of art and offered a broader point of view for his audience. A curious traveler, a photographer, a cartoonist, a bridge player, a social worker, a businessman, an activist, a family member, a Sephardim, an Ashkenaz, a member of the Turkish-Jewish minority, a staff member of Şalom newspaper, Izel Rozental, who is the combination of those interests and occupations, has been able to blend them in perfect harmony and use the latter to develop and ameliorate his drawings to make more sense for the audience.

Tarik Dursun, an award-winning writer, says that Rozental has a humorist side wherever he looks and adds, “He looks at it, and he immediately turns the 'thing' into humor. Don't we, the readers, need Rozentals who have surpassed themselves, renewed themselves, have solid content, and look at society and the individual in a different light?” (Dursun, 2017). As a reader who feels enabled to look at the issues from different perspectives presented humorously through the cartoons, I appreciate the way İzel Rozental encourages the audience to open alternative windows in the reader's mind through his cartoons.

Ferit Öngören, a cartoonist, journalist, and writer point out where there is a great stagnation in the field of humor stories, it was an important and pleasing move that Rozental as a cartoonist published three storybooks in a row. He says, “We should follow Izel closely on his way to fill a big gap. After all, from Hüseyin Rahmi to the present day, humor stories have never experienced such stagnation” (Öngören, 2017). Öngören’s complaint on stagnation evolves into mobility in Rozental cartoons, where the artist feels free to go beyond limits imposed by the political, social and economic agenda of the period and propose to see the unseen, to hear the silent as well as to decode the hidden meaning while making the audience smile.

In an interview, Rozental talked about his appreciation of humor, and the positive effect of his humorist perspective’s effect on his life: “I can say it makes my life easier. Humor is in my genes. I use it as a means, not an end. I have always found healing with humor in the face of various difficulties I have encountered in my private life or in my business life. To give an example, even in the middle of a

tense meeting, a meaningful and appropriate wit suddenly changes the meeting into a different mood and relaxes the nerves” (Rozenal, personal interview, May 21, 2021). Rozenal’s interest in and productivity in many independent areas in life is the main driving force behind his different perspectives and take on topics. His never-ending curiosity, interdisciplinary skills, imagination, and hopeful view on life bring about his exceptional success and contribution to the minority of Turkish Jews.

From 2006 to 2009, Rozenal was the second chairman of the World Federation of Cartoonists Associations (FECO). In 2013, he was elected as the Chairman of the Board of TUKID (All Stationary Association). Along with his art-related works, Rozenal has also been the CEO and a shareholder of Scrikss Pencils Inc., for over 30 years, which was founded in 1963 and is the first pen manufacturer in Turkey.

Goodwin explores the reasons why so many Jews have become cartoon artists. He questions whether there is an explanation for their choice of becoming a cartoonist. He believes that an anti-authoritarian attitude, pain, and suffering would help. He further argues the fact that cartooning requires no particular preparation, either artistic nor academic; young generations can gain a foothold while the elderly can remain as long as they surprise. In addition, the fact remains that Jews have enjoyed unlimited access to outstanding art museums, art schools, and various facets of entertainment and they have gained the ability to flourish through some sense of camaraderie and competition. More important, Jews have been keen observers of urban life according to Goodwin: “Whether native-born or commuters, they are bewildered, stressed and confused by their surroundings” (Goodwin 2001). Looking back at history, the numerous traumas Jews have encountered explain the reasons why they have become silent observers while choosing to stay in accordance with the authorities whose sovereignty they had to obey. The alternative ways they chose to survive have been the ability to laugh, using their sense of humor.

Goodwin argues that as idealists, Jews credit a just, humane civil society, therefore respecting the rule of law democratic institutions, informed voters and progressive causes. Although the topics Rozental chooses to put focus on is various, I have categorized those various topics into seven categories and found out that diplomacy in war has been the topic he mostly concentrated on: “Peace is a concept that all of us question. Will it be achieved in the world someday? Today in 2022 when we talk about peace, we talk about peace on the borders, not only the border of the country we live in but the border of the continent where we live, borders around the world. Without war, there is no peace. After meeting Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein, who by then had seen two World Wars, writes to Freud, who is also struggling for peace. Einstein argues the United Nations should be rebuilt to become the universal advocate for world peace through diplomacy. Freud says, “Don't even bother! Man has two main motivations. One is erotic, Eros, love and the other one is destruction. You cannot separate man from these, both are inside him. Freud concludes peace is actually a break time between two wars” (Rozental, personal interview, July 7, 2020). Despite that Rozental seems to lose hope for the establishment of peace around the world, he does not take a step back in insisting on the necessity of the efforts to achieve peace between the countries. He criticizes authorities when and where he feels the need. My thesis underlines the fact that Şalom creatively offers a space for criticism through humor in cartoons directed against those who continue to fight for war.

Rozental's continuous efforts through this cartoon in the “Tünelin Ucu” corner on the front page of Şalom since 1991, made the newspaper popular around the World according to him:

I joined some international organizations and got to know foreign cartoonists. I invited them to Turkey. Relationships developed. I have had a close relationship with Le Monde working as an artist, for example. Yes, my cartoons have been published 2 times in Le Monde. I mentioned the name of Şalom in both my personal and corporate communication throughout the world. Do you know how many times the name Şalom was mentioned in France? On Fridays, there's a

program showing cartoons from around the world, more precisely the world press. 4-5 journalists come out and discuss current issues. They show cartoons about these subjects, and they tell where and when the cartoons were published. The name Şalom has been mentioned at least 15 times. I'm drawing a universal cartoon, and let me say this: no cartoonist in Turkey is outward-oriented. Şalom gave me the opportunity to do this” (Rozenal, personal interview, October 20, 2020).

Rozenal has developed and nourished international relationships that attracted attention to Şalom. The artist has a unique technique and continues drawing using metaphors and extra visual codes to enable the reader to induce the meaning:

So, when I want to tell something, I do it within the visual form of the cartoon, the frame. Then the reader is more accepting. I make him accept! For the reader, that corner of the cartoon frame becomes a must. When I fit myself into that rectangular, vertical form, I ensure continuity. This is a serious technique. I see everything in that vertical rectangular frame, as do filmmakers” (Rozenal, personal interview, July 7, 2020)

His technique, not only ensure continuity but also made him popular among cartoonists. In the meantime, he continued his efforts to enable the reader to go beyond the denotative level in his cartoons through the connotative level and deduce the meaning accordingly. His use of metaphors instead of speech bubbles although at risk of being misinterpreted forces the reader to spend some effort in understanding:

I do not use speech bubbles. This is my preference: no speech bubbles. I prefer the cartoon to be self-explanatory. I try to be minimal. For example, when I am writing an article, first I write 800, or 900 words, and then I shorten the text to 400 or 500 words. I eliminate unnecessary sentences, I include only the key information, and I do it well. Sometimes I write the text before I start drawing. Then I say to myself, this word is unnecessary, so it doesn't matter whether I put it there or not. I try to keep the text as minimal as possible. My

first choice is a cartoon without speech bubbles. My second choice is a cartoon with very, very few words. The image must explain. The person looking at you is getting a little tired, I'm getting very tired, too, but I'm doing it, I'm drawing. The reader should make an effort to understand the cartoon as it is” (Rozentel, personal interview, July 7, 2020).

#### 4.1. CATEGORIES OF ANALYSIS FOR TÜNELİN UCU

İzel Rozental uses metaphors in his cartoons to communicate ambiguous or problematic issues, making his message more familiar to the audience and easier to understand.

The section will start with a broad definition of the cartoon and elaborate on categories of İzel Rozental cartoons. The specific category the artist focuses upon will be explained in detail.

**Graph 3: Categories of Analysis of “Tünelin Ucu” Over Time**

YEAR	1991-2003		2003-2010		2010-2016	
	Cartoons	Percentage	Cartoons	Percentage	Cartoons	Percentage
<b>Democracy</b>	23	5%	35	10%	18	5%
<b>Corruption</b>	85	19%	64	18%	88	26%
<b>Economy</b>	12	3%	3	1%	10	3%
<b>Living Standards</b>	68	15%	93	27%	70	21%
<b>Security</b>	30	7%	27	8%	13	4%
<b>Foreign Policy</b>	78	18%	57	16%	50	15%
<b>War/Peace</b>	114	26%	33	10%	45	13%
<b>Other</b>	32	7%	34	10%	42	13%

In order to determine the percentages, I divided the total number of cartoons in the specific period of time by the number of cartoons in that specific category.

A detailed analysis of the percentages, as reflected in Graph 5, reveals that İzel Rozental has focused on diplomacy in war as defined war vs. peace category (26%) in the chart between 1991-2003 with a percentage of 26%. It is also the period that the Gulf War started in 1991. Corruption (19%), foreign policy (18%)

and living standards (15%) appear to be the other categories of concerns reflected in the cartoons by İzel Rozentel, where the artist sheds light on how corrupted humanity might become when their priorities are concerned.

The same categories share the first three rows between 2003-2010: living standards occupy the first row with a percentage of 27%. Thus, the second category with a percentage of 18%. The criticism of the foreign policy follows, with a percentage of 16%. The numbers show how Şalom, using cartoon as the tool, continues to direct criticism against diplomats in charge of achieving reconciliation while there is conflict between countries around the world.

A similar aspect is revealed in the following period between 2010 and 2016 with a slight change in the categories which still occupy the first three rows: The corruption category, with a percentage of 26%, is followed by the living standards category. Then comes the category defined as foreign policy positioned closely to the war and peace category. Şalom continues to criticize the devaluation of the universal values that result in the corruption of those as well as the corruption in living standards. The Mavi Marmara incident happened in 2010 which caused a major political crisis between Turkey and Israel constituting one of the main determinants of the relationship between Turkey and the Turkish Jews. As broadcast by BBC News on May 2010, a six-ship flotilla sailed for the Gaza Strip with the intent to deliver humanitarian aid the ships were carrying 10,000 tons of goods, including school supplies, building materials, and two large electricity generators. It was organized by Gaza Movement, an umbrella organization for activists from numerous countries, and a Turkish group called the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Aid (IHH). About 700 activists from 38 countries participated in the expedition in total (Migdalovitz, 2010). Mavi Marmara resisted, and Israeli commandos landed on the ship by descending on ropes from helicopters (Migdalovitz, 2010). In this time period, the priority was on the internal news in accordance with the political agenda of the country.

Nevertheless, “Tünelin Ucu” corner insists on unveiling the hidden messages through cartoons and continues to create a different way of saying

independent of the editorial staff agenda. That is the reason a similar aspect is revealed in this period with a slight change in the categories which still occupy the first three rows: the corruption category with a percentage of 26% is followed by the living standards category. Then comes the category defined as foreign policy positioned closely to the war and peace category. Şalom continues to put criticism forward to the devaluation of the universal values that results in the corruption of those as well as the corruption in living standards. The section with a focus on the topic of war vs. peace accounted for 13% of total cartoon categories in the period of 2010-2016.

In furthering my analysis addition to the categories mentioned above those details will further be given in the following sections, I have focused on the use of color in the cartoon. As stated İzel Rozental was at first against the use of color. Later he applied color when necessary but with care because he noticed that sometimes the newspaper's printed colors were so intense that they overwhelmed his black and white illustrations, which resulted in the disappearance of the cartoons. Therefore, he used color as little as possible and only occasionally (Rozental, personal interview, September 7, 2020).

The speech bubbles have been a major concern in my analysis of the cartoons in "Tünelin Ucu." The artist prefers not to use speech bubbles, preferring the cartoon to be self-explanatory; he tries to be minimal. The in-depth interviews have helped me to go into further detail to elaborate my findings, as in the case of the speech bubbles.

“For example, when I am writing an article, first I write 800, or 900 words, then I shorten the text to 400 or 500 words. I eliminate unnecessary sentences, include only the key information, and do it well” (Rozental, personal interview, January 22, 2022).

When he feels the necessity for the speech bubbles, he tries hard to limit them to a few words: “The person looking at you is getting a little tired, I am getting very tired, too, but I’m doing it. I am drawing. The reader should try to understand the cartoon as it is!” (Rozental, personal interview, January 22, 2022).

Although the denotative level is based on the image and the narrative, if there is any, the reader is expected to go deeper into the process, taking the steps one after the other at the connotative level to resurrect the new meaning.

I paid particular attention to the size of the images. I discovered that the image size is bigger when the artist attaches a specific meaning and smaller when the meaning is less important. The artist expects the reader to pay attention to the size and deduce its importance accordingly, minimizing the need for speech bubbles. The reader is encouraged to venture deeper into analytical thinking, considering both the alignment of the images and their sizes without needing additional words. The alignment of the images has also been my point of concern: I tried to evaluate the alignment according to whether the images face each other or stand back-to-back. I worked hard to analyze whether the alignment between the images was horizontal or vertical.

Izel Rozental creates an intersectionality-oriented identity debate through universal values. Corruption of humanity, the failure of foreign policies to achieve peace between countries, and the deterioration of the living standards as a result of the above have been major universal concerns human beings have been experiencing. The artist focuses on those issues with the intention to open a debate where the audience is encouraged to question, stand for or against, thus express his/her feelings, thoughts, and emotions other words to feel free to express.

Lastly, based on the interviews I had with the artist, I came to believe that although the artist clearly states that he draws instinctively with no specific technique, images in the cartoons are aligned horizontally when referencing people of equal status and vertically when there is a hierarchy in status.

The next sections will give the definitions of each category that has taken place on Graph 5, beginning with the definition in the literature, which paves the way to the specific relation between the editorial caricature and the category.

#### **4.1.1. Security**

The cartoons in the category of security in *Şalom* cover those with a particular focus on the strategies that guide the policies of the Turkish government as well as the policies of the countries worldwide. In his cartoons, Rozental criticizes governmental policies regarding security for not putting emphasis on individuals' well-being but rather giving priority to political interests. Rothschild (1995) explored the definition of security in four different forms:

1. Security is extended from nations to individuals.
2. Security is extended from nations to the international system.
3. Security is extended horizontally from military to political, economic, social, environmental, or human security.
4. The political responsibility for ensuring security is distributed in all dimensions upward from nation-states to international institutions; downwards to regional or local governments and horizontally to non-governmental organizations, to public opinion and the press as well as to both abstract forces of nature and the dynamics of the market. The inclusive and multi-layered understanding of security as Rothchild pointed out in the fourth form speaks to the representations of security in "Tünelin Ucu" with an assumption that concerns, in order to establish security in the country, can guide governments' policies properly.

2003 marks the year that the terrorist attacks at the Neve Shalom Synagogue and the Beth Israel Synagogue in Istanbul happened, which directly targeted Turkish Jews. This period begins in 1992, with the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Sephardic Jews to the Ottoman Empire and ends in 2003. *Şalom* had a very balanced coverage of events outside and inside the Turkish-Jewish minority in this period when Turkish Jews prioritized their Turkish identity. The events in Turkey were often reflected in the news along with the foreign news and the news from Israel. During that time period, Izel Rozental kept criticism of the security policies of the Turkish government.

**Image 1:** “Tünelin Ucu”; Şalom, March 1992



In March 1992, the UN Security Council Resolution 748 established sanctions, including an arms embargo on Libya. This sanction was imposed in reaction to Libya not cooperating in investigating the Libyan connection to the bombing of a US civilian airliner over the United Kingdom and a French airliner over Niger as had been demanded in Security Council Resolution 731 of January 1992. Rozental’s criticism of the Security Council sanctions on Libya is based on the fact that United Nations strategies are limited to impose an embargo on the country subject to conflict and spend time in the meanwhile (Image 1) Those policies do not help the security establishment in the world because their focus is not on the well-being of the individuals, as put forward on the denotative level of the cartoon by the use of wire as a metaphor, but rather on the priority of the political interests as unveiled on the connotative level where Saddam is playing with a paper plane. This is the reason why security policies are often subject to practices of activism and resistance that emerge as a productive space in which to engage the relationship between ethics and security (Rossdale, 2016).

With a belief that security policies should focus on the well-being and safety of the individuals, Rozental presents a critique of the security policies giving

priority to the political interests of the governments concerned. In Image 2, Rozental criticizes the security policies of the countries, where in case the leaders feel they are in danger. Saddam and Bush commence firing on each other when Saddam blows a plastic bag.

**Image 2:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, March 1991



#### **4.1.2. Corruption**

Three types of corruption can be identified in societies.

1. Grand Corruption: “As elected officials, politicians are supposed to make resource allocation decisions based solely upon the interests of the public” (Krueger, 1993). However, some politicians change either the national policies and/or their implementations accordingly to serve their own interests rather than the

interests of the public. This type of corruption has the most serious consequences for society.

2. Bureaucratic Corruption: “This type of corruption refers to corrupt acts of the appointed bureaucrats in their dealings with either their superiors and/or the public” (Ackerman, 1998). “In the most common form, the public is obliged to bribe bureaucrats to receive the service they are already entitled to have” (Kauffman, 1997). This type of corruption also has significant consequences for society.

3. Legislative Corruption: Legislators can be bribed by interest groups to enact laws that would benefit the interest groups rather than the public” (Jain, 2001). This type of corruption mainly includes vote-buying and enacting laws that would benefit politicians and other officials.

Turkey has various examples of all three types of corruption, and Rozental’s cartoons aim to shed light on them. Although the administrative staff of Şalom does not want to attract negative attention towards the Turkish-Jewish minority by criticizing the government, Rozental insists on criticizing corruption when and where he deems it necessary.

It is necessary to underscore that İzel Rozental believes corruption exists regardless of the period and its circumstances. He continues to emphasize the need to raise awareness, as he believes a better world is possible and lately has even increased the percentage of cartoons concerning corruption to encourage new strategies to establish order.

**Image 3:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, November 1991



On the denotative level in Image 3, the narrative is about the multilateral negotiations about regional cooperation that were started in Moscow on 28 January 1992, attended by Israel, the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and the international community, but without Lebanon and Syria. Nevertheless, the reconciliation procedures are constantly sabotaged by Hamas, as obvious on the cartoon connotative level (Ehl, 2021).

Wathne (2021) further argues that one of the anti-corruption interventions to raise awareness using social mobilization tools is the media. Although corruption is complex and anti-corruption interventions alone can achieve only limited results, Hanna (2011) argues that media can be useful for reducing corruption. Cecile and Wathne's concepts of corruption and/or anti-corruption interventions (2021) overlap in terms of media use. Izel Rozental's editorial cartoons address the existence of corruption in Turkey, focusing on it in a determined way, and Şalom criticizes how humanity is corrupted when individual priorities take precedence over collective priorities.

**Image 4:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, December 1991



**Image 5:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, May 1991



Both cartoons in images 4 and 5 criticize the extent to which the leaders are corrupted in their stubbornness to continue the war, as if it is a game between the countries. They are not interested in the damage war causes. Saddam Hussein, in image 5, turns his back on the city that collapsed after the Gulf war and expresses his intention to keep the war going on as if he was playing a game. Image 6 represents corruption based on the İsraili leader Herzog, Palestinian leader Arafat and USA leader Bush on the denotative level and criticizes the violence they keep exerting on each other as if they were playing basketball. The corruption is underlined as the tendency to see the war as a game by the leaders on the connotative level.

### 4.1.3. Foreign Policy

Rozental objectively criticizes Turkey's foreign policy as well as foreign policies worldwide in his cartoons. He also takes international foreign policy into consideration to overtly put forward his viewpoints even when they contradict the government's foreign policy. "The only goal is to get this seat safe. The only remedy for this is war and making enemies against the threat of war. You do not see it unless you are interested in foreign policy. You don't see what's going on, and you can't criticize. Unfortunately, we are too introverted, gazing at ourselves" (Rozental, personal communication, July 7, 2020).

Shaping the broader environment using editorial cartoons and taking action necessary to criticize the foreign policies of the government, İzel Rozental has established his art as a subtle force aiming to raise the awareness of readers. His creativity in using metaphors to communicate indirectly has continued undeterred since 1991.

Taking the above into consideration, it is clear that İzel Rozental is dogged in his criticism of the lack of sincerity in the diplomacy conducted by the governmental authorities. Again and again, he reiterates his disappointment in those policies' limited success in achieving their goals, pointing out that governments prioritize their own interests.

**Image 6:** "Tünelin Ucu" Şalom, February, 1992



İzel Rozental criticizes governmental foreign policies that do not take action but rather stay silent and blind on the denotative level. He takes a step further on the connotative level to criticize the fact that the war between the Azeri and Armenian people in this cartoon does not attract the attention of those foreign countries who do not take action to end the war.

For foreign policy to be effective, policymakers need to maintain stable and sustainable strategies—both hard and soft factors in national power where this is concerned. Constantinos and Tziarras (2018) argue that hard power is usually measured quantitatively through a country's military resources, economy, geography, and population and how these can be used to achieve a state's strategic goals or impose its will on others if need be. However, according to the authors, another aspect of national power is soft power. Joseph Nye conceptualized the concept of soft power. He underlines that a country's soft power comprises the skill to structure a situation in such a way that it is to develop preferences or defines their interest in ways that follow those of your nation (Jackson and Sorensen, 2013). According to the authors, soft power is central to popular culture, diplomacy and foreign policy discussions. From this perspective, Constantina and Tziarras argue that soft power works better in a broader context (2018). Furthermore, Nye argues that soft power resources indirectly shape the environment for policy and that it sometimes takes years to achieve desired outcomes (Nye, 2004).

**Image 7:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, January 1991



**Image 8:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, February 1991



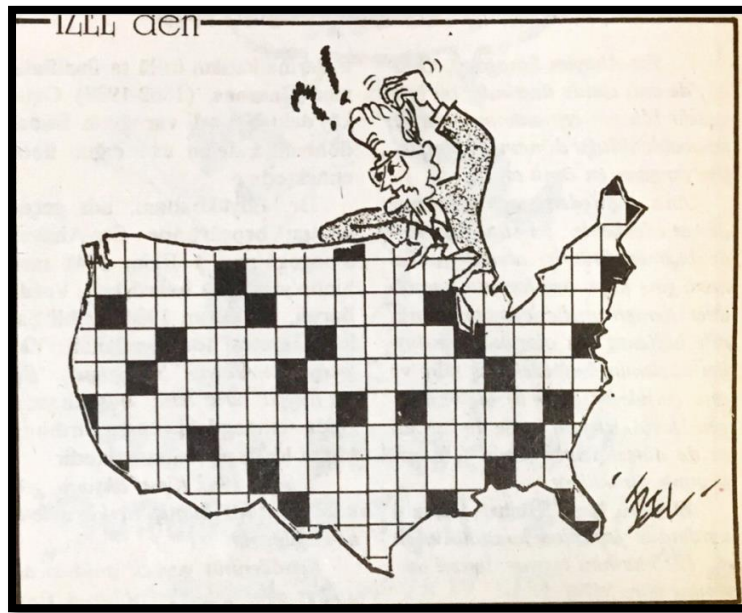
Cartoon images 7 and 8 criticize the failures in foreign policy. In image 7, American president Bush is represented as the leader who works hard for the Middle East countries to compromise. Cartoon image 8 sheds light on the connotative level that war continues in the foreign policies of governments who purportedly desire peace.

#### **4.1.4. Democratic Governance**

According to Rozental, democracy is the only way for governments to ensure citizens' well-being (Rozental, personal communication, July 7, 2020). Therefore, he encourages his readers to participate actively in the policy-making process. Nevertheless, the fact that democracy is still not well established in Turkey prevents him from expressing himself freely at times. By using fish figures in his cartoons, he creates a symbolic distance allowing for a more complimentary space of expression for himself. Taking the above into consideration, Izel Rozental's focus on the category of democracy varies throughout the years: Although he spares the same percentage in the periods between the years 1992-2003 and 2010-2016, he spares the double in the period between the years 2003-2010 when the Turkish-Jewish minority felt under siege and surveillance. It

is in this period when Turkish Jews have felt being under pressure cannot express themselves freely in an atmosphere that lacks democracy.

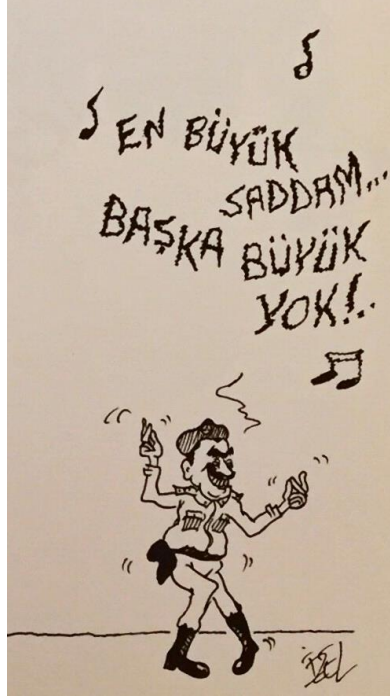
**Image 9:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, January 1992



İzel Rozental criticizes Georges Bush, president of the United States of America who pretends to brainstorm on the cartoon denotative level where the puzzle is one of the different metaphors he uses in his cartoons.

As a pro-democracy activist, İzel Rozental develops humor and favors democracy against authoritarian rule as one and only system that promotes humanity wellbeing. His creativity in his cartoons is explicit through different metaphors to stake his claim in a determined way. This is how he uses his art to offer a space for criticism. In the meanwhile, he is supported by Rosenberg who expects this subtle criticism to have long term outcomes which deserve increased analysis and understanding in a world where tyranny is facing increased resistance: in the last three decades, dozens of corrupt, authoritarian, one-party and military regimes have fallen; as empires, multinational states, and colonial systems have receded, new states emerge and new democracies arise by a variety of means (Rosenberg 2005).

**Image 10:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, October 1991



Rozental draws Saddam Hussein in his cartoon on image 10 dancing and singing on the denotative level: “Saddam is the greatest; there is no other great.” Opposite to the concept of democracy Saddam believes he is the greatest and Rozental puts focus on his sentence on the connotative level with an attempt to attract attention to this point of view against democracy.

#### **4.1.5. Living Standards**

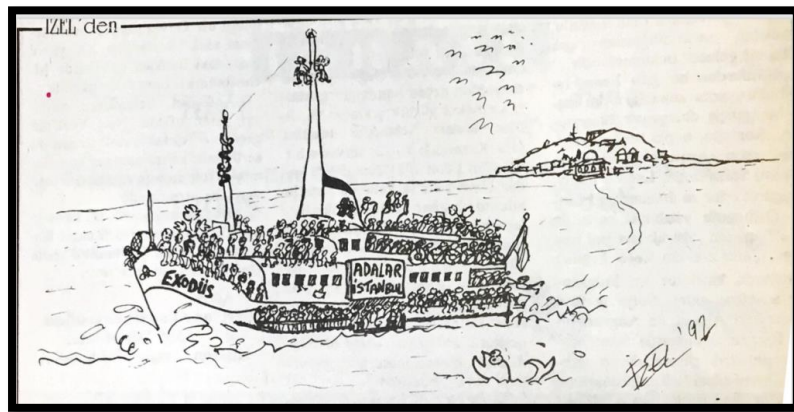
“International organizations now recognize that human development goes beyond economic growth; it is a multidimensional phenomenon that covers many aspects of wellbeing” (Berenger and Verdier-Choucane, 2007). Per capita GDP, a numeric value used to compare wealth among countries remains the most recognized indicator of living standards. “Nevertheless, as the level of living standards cannot be measured solely based on economic performance, insufficient income is only one dimension of under-development” (Desai, 2016).

In 2003-2010, Rozental focused most on living standards because living standards in Turkey began to change under the AKP government. In addition, the change in Turkey’s foreign policy motivated Rozental to focus on foreign policy,

making it the second most covered category, while the corruption category follows as the third.

After the Istanbul synagogue attacks, the feelings of security of the Turkish-Jewish minority re-emerged as a significant issue, as the attacks directly targeted the Turkish-Jewish minority. Cartoons are his way of expressing his concern for the low standards endured and his criticism of the failure of governments to improve those standards; his cartoons also express his frustration that governments are not prioritizing the living standards of their populations (Rozenal, personal interview, July 7, 2020).

**Image 11:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, October 1992



The Exodus occurred in the 13th century BC under dramatic Jewish struggle. The artist uses the event as a metaphor on the denotative level and draws an analogy on the connotative level between Exodus and the circumstances of the 21st century, where people still struggle. Governments do not act to find solutions but rather remain passive. The cartoon shows a ship departing the Prince’s Island for İstanbul with passenger numbers greatly exceeding standard allowances, creating the risk of sinking! Although the Turkish government must stop the ship, an increasing number of passengers continue to travel to and from the Islands during summer under identical conditions.

According to the artist, for living standards to reach desired parameters, human intellectual productivity must occur, paving the way to general productivity

(Rozental, personal interview, July 7, 2020). A multi-faceted model of human productivity must be developed to determine the relative importance of income incentives in motivating individual economic contributions (Figart and Marangos, 2008). In this, the artist remains a forceful critic of the inequalities in living standards, using humor to point out authorities insensitive to the deterioration and abject circumstances in which their citizens live.

**Image 12:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, December 1991



The president of the foundation, Jak Kamhi, celebrates the Quincentennial Anniversary. The artist sheds light on his smiling face to make clear that he is happy to be living in Anatolia for 500 years since Jews' first arrival. In addition, the smile on his face is significant in terms of the living standards of the Turkish-Jewish minority who have been living comfortably since then.

**Image 13:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, January 1992



The denotative narrative focuses on the chief Rabbi, who says that although the plants do not grow for fifteen years, the roots are solid. He uses plants on the connotative level as the metaphor for Turkish Jews who keep living in Anatolia since 1492, as underlined in the cartoon in image 14. The specific event in the cartoon is Tubisvat, the Jewish new year for trees. As a part of the ritual, Jews eat fruit and the seven spices from Israel: grapes, figs, pomegranates, and olives as food from the Holy Land. Fruit trees are awarded the special status in Torah because of their importance in sustaining life. Tree roots used as the metaphor for Turkish Jews put focus on the solidity of the minority to keep living in the country; whatever the standards are, the circumstances endure.

#### **4.1.6. Economy**

Economics refers to properly managing the sovereign's realm (Mitchell, 2008). Even though an economist's job is to provide objective information based on data, the public receives misleading and deceptive information from economists in Turkey. For example, inflation rates that have been shared with the public over the years have been manipulated, according to Rozental. He maintains, in addition, that the entities responsible for economic crises are not necessarily officials and party leaders but other structures of power at work behind the scenes (Rozental,

personal interview, July 7, 2020). Thus, he uses metaphors in his cartoons to communicate ambiguous or problematic issues, making his message more familiar to audiences and easier to understand. Lacking trust for the economic figures given by the government, the artist shifts priority to different concepts.

**Image 14:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, September 1992



In this cartoon, the Turkish economy has failed to the extent that Turkey is closed for renovation on the denotative level by using a shutter as a metaphor on the connotative level. Rozental does not believe that the renovation will improve the economy, arguing that the measurement of human development is not GDP but the intellectual productivity of human beings (Rozental, personal interview, July 7, 2020). This is why he criticizes both intellectually both and with respect to GDP the halt of production, which would provide no benefit for economic growth.

According to the artist, the public receives erroneous information from economic reports worldwide. Joseph Stiglitz agrees with Rozental and further argues that the “US Treasury Department is so arrogant in its economic analyses and prescriptions that it often retains tight control over what even the president sees” (Stiglitz, 2000); he further argues that open discussion would raise profound

questions from the American press. In other words, economic variables have not been divulged to the public within the country or worldwide. “But bad economics was only a symptom of the real problem: Secrecy! Smart people are more likely to do stupid things when they close themselves off from outside criticism and advice; if there is one thing I have learned in government, it is that openness is most essential in realms where expertise seems to matter most” (Stiglitz, 2000).

Jonathan Spittle (2016) agrees with İzel Rozental that the entities responsible for economic crises are not necessarily government officials but other structures behind the scenes:

Whether manipulated by organizations behind the scenes and/or kept silent by so-called people who tend to keep economic variables secret for national priorities, İzel Rozental in Şalom pointedly criticizes the fact that economists mislead citizens and do not behave objectively. Rozental’s use of metaphors in his cartoons to communicate ambiguous or problematic issues to make his message more familiar to audiences and easier to understand demonstrates his creativity and determination to expose the manipulation.

**Image 15:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, April 1991



**Image 16:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, May 1992



Cartoon images 16 and 17 focus on the economics of how human beings choose to spend their assets. The artist communicates his criticism of the inequality between human beings by comparing the Jews struggling to finish their Passover shopping with Israeli tourists coming to Antalya for gambling. Satisfying hunger as the primary need for human beings is straightforward in the cartoon in image 16 and compared on the connotative level with the way people choose to spend their money, as in the gambling example in the cartoon on image 17 to underline the inequality in the denotative level between human economies.

#### **4.1.7. War vs. Peace, Diplomacy in War**

Rozental believes that war will exist as long as humans do, yet regardless of the period and specifics of a situation, he always favors peace over war. The conflicts, war, and peace hold a different status in his cartoons. As such, Şalom aims to support the reader to find the opportunity to go beyond the descriptive level of the issue and see what lies beneath his cartoons. While elaborating on the concept of war and peace, more aspects need to be accounted for. Rozental believes that war is inevitable, parallel to the existence of society.

Israel and Palestine are examples of a political conflict that has affected thousands of people and left many wounded. The Arab-Israeli or Israeli-Palestinian

conflict is a contemporary issue that merits inclusion in a series of historical works titled "Contesting the Past." Caplan defines the whole series of events as "the single most intensely disputed community struggle on the planet today, as of 2022." All in all, such a simplistic chronology is of slight service to anybody, and studying history is a considerably trickier endeavor (Caplan, 2020). The amount of time that Palestine has been under the occupation of Zionist Jews equals more than 70 years, making it one of the most protracted armed conflicts to date. Starting from the War of Independence, which occurred between Jews and Palestinians, countless numbers of memorials, monuments, and written resources, associating the war and its subjects as martyrs sacrificed in the name of glory, were added to their national history (Azaryahu, M. and Foote, K., 2007). To this day, the conflict continues, and Jerusalem remains claimed by both Palestinian and Israeli authorities, having affected countless lives of children, women, and men.

Furthermore, to thoroughly understand the concept of war, many more incidents can be given, one of them being the Serbian-Croatian war that resulted in thousands of casualties. Under Serbian direction and with the assistance of local Serbian terrorists, the Yugoslav Federal Army publicly declared its desire to annex the Republic of Croatia land. These factors contributed to a brutal and terrible battle that claimed numerous civilian lives and destroyed many buildings, including hospitals. This conflict for Croatia's freedom and independence lasted from 1991 until 1995. On the Republic of Croatian territory, several mass graves were discovered and excavated during and after the conflict. They are a sad testimony to extraordinary cruelty and bestial behavior toward defenseless victims. The Yugoslav Federal Army, commanded by the Serbs, used an ethnic cleansing, expulsion, and murder strategy to seize control of Croatian land and create their government (Bosnar, 2005).

As stated throughout history, these events have never revolved solely around two nations; other nations have always been involved in their lands, politics, resources, and people. During times of war, widely varying factors and bodies are

involved in the entire construct, leaving us unable to fully comprehend the actors to blame.

It should be noted that even though the primary concern is to elaborate on the occurrence and the aftershock of the Gulf War, these examples should also be given to explain the concept of war. Some of the events fell into the time zone when the events of the Gulf War occurred. One of the biggest atrocities committed during the Bosnian war was the Srebrenica Massacre. The massacre took place during the Bosnian war (1991-1995), and even though the exact circumstances are still unknown, it has been determined through various trials (such as the Serb R. Karadzic trial and the Serbian versus Bosnian genocide trial at the International Court of Justice) that the incident legally qualifies as genocide and has also established the key events. Bosnian Serb forces captured the enclave, designated a UN "Safe Area," between July 10 and July 12, 1995. Approximately 7000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were murdered for many days, or they either disappeared or were assumed dead (Obradovic-Wochnik, 2009). In addition to the 7000 men, the Bosnian Muslim Enclave of the former Yugoslavia deported more than 30,000 Muslim women, children, and older adults from the region, considered Europe's worst massacre since the Second World War (Saxon, 2005). The volatile environment in the Balkans and can be used as an accurate example of how polarized groups of people come up with ways to "claim their right" to a certain land, human or entity, without caring for the possible casualties.

The stunning incident of a war that occurred close to Turkey, which was later referred to as genocide, is the massacre which occurred between Armenian armed forces and Azerbaijanis; on October 18, 1991, the Republic of Azerbaijan declared its independence from the USSR. Twenty per cent of Azerbaijan's lands at the time of its independence—Nagorno-Karabakh and the neighboring areas—were under Armenian military control. One of the deadliest chapters in Azerbaijani history is the genocide in Hocalı town, where Armenian soldiers killed Azerbaijanis to carry out their goals of ethnic cleansing. Referring to the Rome Statute (1998) and the United Nations Convention on the Prevention of the Punishment of

Genocide (1948), it can be determined that the illegal occupation of Hocalı by the Armenian armed forces, which included the killing of ethnic groups and the forcible transfer of children from one group to another to eliminate them, could be regarded as genocide (Mustafayev, 2011). Moreover, according to Kibaroglu, the Armenian military slaughtered 600 people. On the evening of February 25, 1992, the Armenians massacred 7000 people in the Azerbaijani village of Hocalı by blocking all entrances and exits, assisted by the 366th Russian regiment stationed in the area. The Armenians killed civilians and helpless Turks, slaughtering newborns, women, the elderly, and children while making no exceptions. Official accounts state that 613 people were brutally killed that evening. In addition to the 83 children and 106 women who died after suffering horrific torture, 487 people had serious injuries, and 1275 were held as prisoners. Only after valiant attempts were made were the surviving civilians able to live (Kibaroglu et al., 2009)

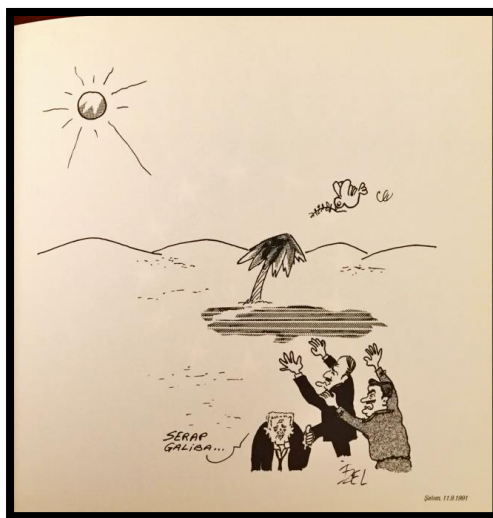
The most recent series of events in recent history is the war between Ukraine and Russia, which has devastated millions, resulting in hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens fleeing their country to seek shelter elsewhere, consequently causing trauma and stress that will last for generations to come. Russia attacked Ukraine on February 24, 2022, sparking the worst military confrontation in Central Europe since 1945. By mid-May 2022, there had been an estimated 4000 civilian fatalities and over 4000 severe injuries (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2022). According to the UN Refugee Agency, 6.5 million people now call themselves refugees, and 8 million have been displaced within Ukraine (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2022). The Russian-Ukrainian war is significantly affecting the health and well-being of people in Ukraine, one of the poorest nations in Europe.

From a perspective where all these events are thoroughly evaluated, it can be concluded that war as a phenomenon has immense depth, where countless parties are involved, and some intensives remain unknown even to this date. Furthermore, war is, by nature, volatile and unpredictable as it is not a cause but the result of power imbalance and greed. Rozental has demonstrated an approach where he

analyzes and criticizes times of war through the editorial cartoon. The so-called concept of peace, on the other hand, is supported by the parties that remain partially neutral, disregarding the human and environmental losses that result in the process.

Although peacebuilding is a confusing concept with multiple meanings, the term was used by UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali's Agenda for Peace in 1992. It has been defined as actions that identify and support structures that tend to strengthen and solidify peace to avoid a relapse into conflict (Ghali, 1992).

**Image 17:** “Tünelin Ucu”, Şalom, September 1991



The cartoons show American President Georges Bush, Libya President Muammar Ghaddafi and Israeli President C'haim Hertzog in 1991. Bush and Gaddafi try to reach the sun, which metaphorically signifies light. They try hard to be enlightened. The bird carrying the leaf of Daphne in its mouth signifies the approach of peace. Nevertheless, he has lost hope for peace to be ultimately achieved in the world and tries to be heard from the mouth of the Israeli President, who thinks he is daydreaming in the desert.

Image 18: "Tünelin Ucu", Şalom, July 1991



Image 19: "Tünelin Ucu", Şalom, August 1991



Cartoons in images 20 and 21 focus on the criticism of diplomacy in times of conflict. Image 21 focuses on the presidents of the USA and Russia in their struggles of reconciliation on the denotative level, which results in damage on one of the sides: Gorbachov in this case. Image 20 sheds light on the Israeli leader

Hayim Herzog who tries to find the solution to the immigrants coming to Israel from all over the world. The artist draws attention on the denotative level to the fact that the diplomacy between the leaders takes place independently of the circumstances but instead takes the countries' political concerns into account, even for the sake of damage the process causes for the parties involved.

## **5. DIALOGIC RELATIONSHIP OF “TÜNELİN UCU” WITH THE FRONT-PAGE NEWS**

My research to form a theoretical and conceptual framework reveals the dialogic relationship between “Tünelin Ucu” and the front-page news to discuss that editorial cartoons allow Rozental, and consequently Şalom, to create a form of expression in which the phenomena are framed by situating the problem in question within the context of everyday life; thereby, they exploit the universal values to highlight their intended messages (Greenberg, 2002). During my interviews, Rozental makes clear that he consistently expresses his viewpoints on universal values and does not refrain from making those viewpoints discernible regardless of the pressure from the government and/or the Turkish-Jewish minority. Furthermore, Rozental emphasizes the fact that it is crucial for minorities to express themselves through different channels and find unique ways to reach audiences such as the case in his cartoons. Therefore, I believe that Rozental's cartoons can communicate their messages both locally and globally, reaching a wider audience. By giving minorities an active role outside of what is considered traditional or acceptable, Rozental turns Şalom into an active agent questioning the status quo and also paves the way to put the criticism forward in terms of the inability of the foreign policies in seeming to establish peace between the countries, the continuation of war as a sign of the corruption of human beings and the expression of the continuous hope that peace will ever be established around the world.

In the following sections, paying particular attention to Rozental's nine cartoons between 1992 and 1994 on the consequences of the Gulf War, I mainly focused on the visual representations of the politics and standpoints in the cartoons about the destructive effects of war after the Gulf War that started on August 2, 1990, with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The occupation was met with international condemnation and brought immediate economic sanctions against Iraq by members of the UN Security Council. As a member of the UN, Turkey implemented these measures as well. The period is also significant because the first Intifada, the Palestinian uprising against Israel's capture of Palestinian lands, also falls in this before, starting in 1987 and lasting until 1993. In addition, the Bosnian war took

taken in the same period between the years 1992-1995 as part of the breakup of Yugoslavia. Also, The Hocalı massacre occurred as a result of the mass killing of Azerbaijanis by the Armenian forces in the same year, 1992. As I discussed in the previous section, I chose the period between 1992–1994 after the Gulf War because the wars mentioned above have all taken place within the same period in which the caricaturist had the opportunity to express his standing against war.

I examine nine editorial cartoons published on the cover page of *Şalom* under three themes: corruption, foreign policy, and continuous hope for peace comparing with the front-page news of the same period. As it will be discussed, while the cover page of the newspaper presents the news in a neutral tone, Rozental, and therefore *Şalom*, raise their criticism via the editorial cartoon about the national and global problems.

*Şalom*'s communication style between 1947 and 1992 revealed that the minority was self-enclosed. In the first period, during 1947–1960, newspaper articles were written in Ladino. The main issues and headlines in the news were primarily immigration occurrences in various countries. In addition, national events in Turkey dominated the news. In international news, the London Conference and Jewish-Arab Friendship were on the agenda. The news was released in the context of the current developments in Palestine. While Hanukkah news were also in the headlines, the wealth tax practice in Turkey was included. Between 1960 and 1970, the articles published were in Ladino and Turkish. In the headlines, religious holidays, the anniversary celebration of the newspaper, and immigration were shed light on. Immigration events were still in the news, as has been the case for immigration from Morocco. On the other hand, The General Elections were one of the most important events on Turkey's timeline (add the year of the elections). *Şalom* published articles in Ladino and Turkish between 1970 and 1980, and political topics such as the Turkish prime ministerial elections stood out in the press during the era, while issues addressing antisemitism continued on the global agenda.

This period was followed by a time that the Turkish-Jewish community chose to put a particular emphasis on their Turkish identity between 1992 and 2003. All the articles were published in Turkish during this period. Political events were in the foreground in the domestic press in this period. For example, Tansu Çiller, who was elected as the first female prime minister of Turkey, Erdogan's international meetings, Mustafa Sarıgül's conflict with Syria, and Balat Hospital, Or-ahayim, were among the headlines. At the same time, the warheads in Bosnia occupied the press, and events related to Nazis have also taken place on the agenda from time to time. Şalom highlighted Holocaust with a particular focus on the Auschwitz camp. An Israeli-born astronaut going into space was another newsworthy event. While relations between Israel and the Vatican improved, support came from the Jewish minorities for the Muslims in Bosnia.

My research on the front covers of Şalom shows that, after the terrorist attack on November 15, 2003, Şalom went through a period under siege and surveillance with a conscious choice to remain silent as far as the news about the Turkish-Jewish minority is concerned. This silence and keeping a low profile came to an end with the Mavi Marmara incident in 2010. After this incident, the minority changed how it expressed itself in the newspaper and became more open about its thoughts and feelings. All the articles published in this period were in Turkish. Terrorist incidents were generally the focus of internal news. Terrorist attacks were condemned, and statements were made in response. Prime Minister Erdogan's sincere talks with the United States continued. One of the most famous stories in foreign news was the Davos summit that brought together Peres and Babacan.

My archival work shows that the global agenda over the national agenda had prevailed on the front pages of Şalom except for the period that started in 2003 and ended with the bombing attacks until 2010 when the Mavi Marmara incident took place. During these turbulent years, Izel Rozental, as he has pointed out in the interviews, has been courageous and has taken the risk of being criticized by different segments of the Turkish-Jewish minority and the administrative department of the newspaper for overtly expressing his stance (Rozental, personal

interview, July 7, 2020). "I draw what I have in my mind. I do not care whether it will be published or not. Let me be clear; sometimes it is not published! I don't apply self-censorship. I see self-censorship as the most dangerous thing right now, and not only in terms of cartoons..." Although the artist disagrees with the editorial stance from time to time, he stubbornly draws what he has in his mind. The concept that Rozental chose to put focus on the most is corruption. İzel Rozental believes corruption exists whatever the circumstances of the period are and continues to communicate the need to raise awareness as he believes a better world is possible. Nevertheless, he also believes that as long as the hatred among people in relation to race, religion, and ethnicity continues, the search for war will continue.

The specific examples of the editorial cartoons where İzel Rozental, in opposition to the newspaper's stance, does not refrain from expressing his feelings and thoughts freely were put in the "Tünelin Ucu" corner on the front page. I want to underline that although the newspaper's attitude stays following the country's political agenda, Şalom unveils the hidden meanings through İzel Rozental's cartoons. To underline the contrast between the newspaper's political agenda and the criticism put forward by "Tünelin Ucu" by İzel Rozental, headlines on the front cover are compared with the semiological analysis of the editorial cartoon. This contrast shows that independent of the political agenda of the period, Şalom uses the editorial cartoon to straightforward its message, which otherwise is supposed to stay silent.

What makes Rozental's cartoons different is that they offer a different way of seeing reality and uncovering its hidden meanings. They make different points of view to be heard, especially about the issues often received in silence. In addition to the characters, the humorous narrative created by Rozental is also different in terms of his language. By giving minorities an active role outside of what is considered traditional or acceptable, Rozental turns Şalom into an active agent questioning the status quo and paves the way to put the criticism forward in terms of the inability of the foreign policies in seeming to establish peace between the

countries, corruption of human beings, and the expression of the continuous hope that peace will ever be established around the world.

Although Rozental has a clear political stance in his cartoons, his humanitarian side is also underlined. He opposes hierarchical structures and aims to raise awareness about and draw attention towards humanitarian values. That is why I propose that cartoons be considered an art of criticism. Each laughter aims to encourage the reader to observe, think, and question the reality created by governments. By challenging the mainstream political discourse, the artist objects to hidden forms of violence and proposes ethical alternatives. In my dissertation, I chose to underline the artist's questioning by comparing the front cover of the newspaper and the "Tünelin Ucu" Corner and to help the reader raise awareness of the criticism put forward by İzel Rozental and Şalom.

In this sense, I believe İzel Rozental can be considered an organic intellectual who was born to an Askenazi and Sefaradic Jewish household and derives his authority from the Turkish-Jewish minority living in Turkey. Familiar with the culture of the latter, the cartoonist expresses his feelings and thoughts, which he considers as the feelings and thoughts of the minority; in spite of the criticism, he might encounter when his ideas differ from the Turkish-Jewish minority group, he does not hesitate to express them freely which indeed is the outstanding feature of the Turkish-Jewish minority. Although he says that "I do not have that level of intellectual level, I am at a superficial level" (Rozental, personal interview, July 7, 2020), what makes him an organic intellectual is the fact that the moral and cultural judgement he possesses is the outcome of his belonging to the Turkish-Jewish minority who feeds him continuously with the traditional belief system he was born into. Rozental's organic intellectuality comes into practice in his cartoons, using verbal and non-verbal signs to disseminate information and express ideas and opinions on the abovementioned issues. His primary role is to attract more attention and raise more curiosity; Rozental, as an organic intellectual, succeeds in responding to contemporary issues in a humorous and satirical manner that can be read and understood.

His cartoons, although they do not cover a large portion of the newspaper, have an impact as they aim to convey the messages effectively and humorously. Using all the gathered information in relation to the facts mentioned above, I analyzed "Tünelin Ucu" editorial cartoons in line with their appearance in *Şalom* since 1991, with a particular focus on the period between 1992–1994. Considering the themes, the artist chose to focus on, such as corruption, foreign policy, and hope for peace, I unriddled the underlying meanings and the expressions he conveyed. In doing so, I tried to shed light on how he draws attention to the agenda.

### **5.1 WAR WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST AS A SIGN OF CORRUPTION OF THE HUMANITY**

It is far more difficult to reduce corruption in fragile states and countries where corruption is rampant and systematic (Wathne, 2021). As the author points out, the more embedded corrupt activity is within a society's broader social and cultural norms, the more difficult it is to deal with because there will be more things to change, more reflexive and organized resistance to such change, less legitimacy attaching to those who promote the changes and considerable collective action problems. She further argues that corruption is not a disease or a deviation but the historical standard and that no country has achieved zero corruption nor is likely to do so anytime soon. She asserts that while there is no single path to reform, factors for potential include collaboration and coordination; taking advantage of windows of opportunity; building and harnessing political will and citizen support for good governance; changing expectations; and reshaping the policy arena. She offers anti-corruption interventions emphasizing that they must be flexible and politically responsive. In this, there are limits to what anti-corruption interventions can achieve and the role that donor agencies can play. The effectiveness of anti-corruption interventions depends on the broader political economy, including the policy arena (Wathne, 2021).

During the years that follow the beginning of the Gulf War in 1991, while *Şalom*'s cover page underlines the fact that human beings are in search of

establishing peace worldwide, the editorial cartoon by Rozental, “Tünelin Ucu,” on the front cover insists that war will continue to exist as a sign of the corruption of humans as humans are so stubborn in believing that war would ever be a solution for their problems.

**Image 20:** Contrast: Cartoon vs. Front Cover in terms of Corruption



July 8, 1992

August 19, 1992

March 11, 1992

**Image 21:** Cartoons: Focus on Corruption



First, the newspaper’s front cover, dated March 11, 1992 on the left side, makes it explicit that while Turkish Jews celebrate the 500th anniversary of their arrival to Turkey, the editorial cartoon criticizes the fact that although the Hocalı

massacre continues, no attention has been paid to the violence! Some of the captions are as follows: “500th anniversary of living peacefully together where The Turkish-Jewish minority representatives, headed by Chief Rabbi Rav David Asseo, visited President Turgut Özal on 1 March 1992. In accordance with the latter, another caption is “500 the Anniversary Cocktail”, where The Chief Rabbi of the Rep. of Turkey organized a cocktail party on the occasion of the Turkish-Jewish minority expressing their gratitude to the Turkish nation on the anniversary of a 500 year-long peaceful life of the Jews on Turkish soil. “Grace at Neve Şalom” is another caption where the focus is on the Sephardic Jews who were expelled from their homeland by the bigoted Spanish administration of the time. They expressed gratitude to the country’s administration and the Turkish nation on the 500th anniversary of their admission to the Turkish lands. The contrast between the news on the front page underlying the gratitude, the thankfulness and the deep contentment of the Turkish Jewish minority on the one hand and the cartoon where the profound indifference of the audience towards the conversation about the massacre is focused. As a result of the corruption of humanity, leaders make it as if they are blind and deaf to what takes place worldwide but rather give priority to their concerns by giving deductive speeches. The contrast between the cartoon and the editorial layout of the front page is significant in terms of the courage İzel Rozentel put forward in order to underline the fact that although a comfortable atmosphere seems to exist for the Turkish-Jewish minority in Turkey, the minorities abroad suffer to a great extent around the world as their rights and privileges are not taken into account by the parties involved as has been the case in the north of Iraq.

Many captions on the Şalom front cover dated 19 March 1992 underline the comfortable atmosphere for the time being: “There is no evidence on Turkish-Nazi connection”, where German historian Monika Herzog said that the remaining documents from the Nazi concentration camps were insufficient to prove a link between Turkey and Germany. Another caption on the same front cover is about the Jewish Leaders who condemn Bosnia and Herzegovina Massacre: As the Serbs massacre against Muslim people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and their keeping

civilian's concentration camps began to alarm the globe, American Jewish leaders make a call to the entire world to stop these events which is a different caption that mentions the call from the American Jewish leaders:" American Jews call for world leaders.

While the front page of the edition dated 19 August 1992, on the right side, states that there is no evidence of a Turkish-Nazi connection, Rozental's editorial cartoon asserts that the Nazi spirit remains alive worldwide. After semiotic analysis, the operation and the identification of the perception on the denotative level show the Nazi spirit on a cloud, and demon figures and dead bodies are used to refer to the tragic events that took place during the Holocaust. Moreover, at the connotative level, temporal, spatial and psychological inferences reveal that hatred for Jews keeps the Nazi spirit alive. The Nazi figure is drawn more considerably than the rest of the figures to attract the reader's attention. As long as the Nazi spirit lives, the Holocaust that occurred during WWII is likely to be repeated as a sign of the corruption of humanity. The contrast between the editorial layout on the front cover and the cartoon in "Tünelin Ucu" corner is significant in terms of the freedom of expression of the artist in underlying the fact that the Nazi spirit is still alive, whatever the lack of evidence proves against it. The fact is quite dangerous not only for Turkish Jews but for all Jews worldwide.

The front cover of the newspaper dated 8 July 1992, in the middle, points out that all human beings are sisters and brothers. According to the news, the world Jewish Congress will be holding an international conference called "Antisemitism and Prejudice in a Changing World in Brussels, the capital of Belgium, between 6 and 8 July. Another caption focus on the 500-anniversary celebration in the ottoman tent. The news reports the celebration of the 500th anniversary with great interest in the Otağ (Pavillion) party, where hundreds of doctors came together last week in New York's most prominent hospital in the USA.

Nevertheless, the editorial cartoon shows that these sisters and brothers continuously search for reasons to fight with and kill each other. This is the reason why although Israeli and American leaders spend efforts to achieve peace in the

Middle East, the man with his arm on his shoulders walks away with a sad face to find a different place where he can continue to fight. After the semiotic analysis, the operation and the identification of the perception on the denotative level show that the two leaders are in conversation in a peaceful atmosphere, where the bird is used as a metaphor; on the connotative level, the temporal, spatial and psychological inference reveals that although diplomacy between the countries continues, the leaders are unable to find a solution to the problems. The cartoon is significant as it clarifies the desire of human beings to continue the war as a sign of corruption.

## **5.2. THE INABILITY OF FOREIGN POLICY TO ESTABLISH PEACE BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES**

The world is moving toward tremendous respect for human rights and civil liberties: Authoritarian rule, political despotism, state criminality and corruption, and the systematic abuse of minorities are under challenge (Rosenberg, 2005). According to the authors, while there has been momentum in favor of democratic freedom, further such progress is far from guaranteed. The foreign policies conducted by the governmental authorities take the countries' priorities into concern rather than their citizens' human rights and civil liberties.

The editorial cartoon underscores that governments prioritize their political interests but fail to find solutions to existing problems through foreign policy. This is in stark contrast to the news on *Şalom*'s front cover.

As mentioned in the previous section, for foreign policy to be effective, policymakers need to maintain stable and sustainable strategies. Therefore, foreign policymakers, strategists, and leaders in charge should consider the actual circumstances while making accurate projections for the near future to be both stable and sustainable. The following front covers will be elaborated in detail to shed light on the inability of foreign policies to be neither stable nor sustainable.

**Image 22:** Contrast: “Tünelin Ucu” vs. Front Cover in terms of Foreign Relations



September 2, 1992

February 9, 1994

April 8, 1992

**Image 23:** Cartoons: Focus on Foreign Relations



First, the September 2, 1992, edition on the left side sheds light on the cooperation between Turkey and Israel in terms of tourism; nevertheless, the editorial cartoon focuses on the fact that the countries' leaders do not hear each other.

The semiotic analysis, the perception and identification of the operation on the denotative level, sheds light on the negotiations between leaders. Nevertheless, the spatial, temporal and psychological inference on the connotative level underlines that although the two countries' leaders Arafat and Rabin, seem to negotiate, their opposition against each other is used as a metaphor for the failure

of diplomacy through foreign relations. In addition, their misinterpretation of what is being said and heard is again a metaphor for the failure of foreign relations. Some of the captions on the front cover are as follows: "Israel and Turkey are pairing for tourism", where the focus is on Turkey choosing Israel as its pair for tourism. According to the tourism agreement signed between Turkey and Israel, Turkey will appear as the pairing country in the Israeli Ministry of Tourism's co-promotional activities. Another caption refers to Israel, who liberates 800 Palestinians. According to The Independent from Washington, with the start of the Middle East Peace Negotiations, Israel took measures to improve human rights in Gaza and the West bank. Based on that decision, 800 Palestinians were liberated; measures preventing Palestinians from entering Israel were removed; some streets and houses sealed by the army were reopened. The contrast between the editorial laid out on the front cover with a focus on the smooth agreement between Israel and Turkey as well as Israel and Palestine on different fields and the cartoon where Arafat and Rabin do not hear nor see each other is significant in terms of the cartoonist underlying the fact that two leaders are far behind of achieving any agreement in any field. The cartoon puts forward the need for foreign policies to be successful.

Second, the February 9, 1994, edition in the middle, points out that a peace and tolerance conference was held in İstanbul; yet, as Rozental depicts in the editorial cartoon, the massacre in Bosnia was ignored. The editorial cartoon points out that world leaders cannot define what is happening there. The semiotic analysis, the perception and identification of the operation on the denotative level sheds light on the leaders trying to reach a mutual understanding about what happened in Bosnia; nevertheless, the spatial, temporal, and psychological inference on the connotative level underlines the fact that although the leaders seem to make efforts to stop the tragedy in Bosnia, they do not seem to make an effort to understand each other. The senseless expressions on their faces are a metaphor for the failure of diplomacy in foreign relations. Some of the captions on the front cover are as follows: "Peace and Tolerance Conference was held in İstanbul. The news focuses on the conference organized by the Appeal of Conscience Foundation between 7–9 February. Another caption sheds light on Peres, who says that "Arafat is not trying

to establish a Palestinian state. According to the news, Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs Peres met with US Secretary Warren Christopher, and four weeks of delay was announced in order to be able to reach an agreement between the two states. "Barbarity in Sarajevo" is another caption on the front cover that criticizes the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina with the comment. "Europe watches while Serbs continue to slaughter. Although the newspaper forwards the peace and tolerance conference to be held in İstanbul, Tünelin Ucu Corner on the front cover says the opposite: Neither tolerance nor a peaceful atmosphere exists in the world due to the indifference of the leaders in charge and their lack of motivation in achieving peace.

Lastly, the editorial cartoon on the newspaper on April 8, 1992, on the left side, criticizes the failure of leaders' foreign policies while the newspaper focuses on the reunion of the Jews with the Spanish King, whose ancestors forced the Jewish minority to leave Spain. After the semiotic analysis, the perception and identification of the operation on the denotative level shed light on the leaders trying to reach a mutual understanding within a peaceful atmosphere where the vase full of flowers is used as a metaphor *per se*; nevertheless, the spatial, temporal and the psychological inference on the connotative level underlines the fact that although the leader. Rabin and Arafat make efforts to hear and understand each other; their attempts to kick each other under the table are used as a metaphor for the failure of diplomacy through foreign relations. Some of the captions on the front cover are as follows: "King of Spain meets Spanish Jews" According to the news on the 500th anniversary of the edict issued by the Catholic rulers, King of Spain Don Juan Carlos met with the Spanish Jews on Tuesday, March 31, 1992. Describing the ceremony held at the Madrid Synagogue as "Sincere from the point of Royalty", Don Juan Carlos said that this was "The king's meeting with the Spanish Jews" Another caption reports about the Middle East Peace Negotiations at the 5th round in Washington [T1] on April 27. According to the news, Lebanon, Syrian, Jordan and the Palestinians have decided to participate in the 5th round of bilateral talks of the Middle East Peace Conference. Freedom for Iraqi Jews to travel abroad is another caption that claims that the Iraqi government has given some Jews permission to travel abroad with a tourist visa. According to the information given

by Mordechai Ben Porat, President of the Association of Iraqi Jews in Israel, a total of 110 Jews live in Iraq, and the majority of the community will benefit from this freedom to travel that was put to effect. The contrast between the layout on the front cover in terms of the news that focuses on the foreign policy's achievements and the cartoon where Arafat and Rabin kick each other under the table is significant as it holds an opposite stance against the editorial policy.

Although the front covers of *Şalom* have been straightforward, the positive developments between the countries aiming to establish peace worldwide and the editorial cartoons on the front pages underline that foreign relations have been unsuccessful in fulfilling the goal.

### **5.3 CONTINUOUS HOPE OF THE HUMAN BEINGS THAT PEACE WILL EVER BE ESTABLISHED**

Some scholars continue their search for peace to be established around the world. Jonathan Pickney (2020) sheds light on the relationship between peace and nonviolent resistance and underlines the role of nonviolent resistance in achieving peace. He presents evidence from growing literature on the latter, emphasizing three critical ways in which nonviolent resistance advances peace: the first, through its practice; second, through its ability to overthrow unjust political systems and third, through its positive long-term effects on political order (Pickney, 2021). He believes that complete peace is an ideal, unachievable in the real world but meaningful as a target for effort. “While we may never reach a position of total positive peace, certain political and social orders have greater positive peace than others” (Pickney, 2021). That is the reason why he believes that humanity is faced with a dilemma and three poor choices to respond to it: The first being resisting unjust political orders while giving up the possibility for peace, the second being asking the powerful to give up their positions of power; and the last but not the least being to overthrow unjust political orders knowing that what will follow is only likely to harm peace in the long term.

One way or the other, the continuous hope of human beings that peace will ever be established in the world is the third theme communicated by *Şalom*. *Şalom*

three front covers below demonstrate mutual agreement between the newspaper and the editorial cartoons on the survival of the continuous hope for peace. The dates are between 1992–1994 period which my study concentrates on.

**Image 24:** Contrast: Cartoon vs. Front Cover in terms of Continuous Hope

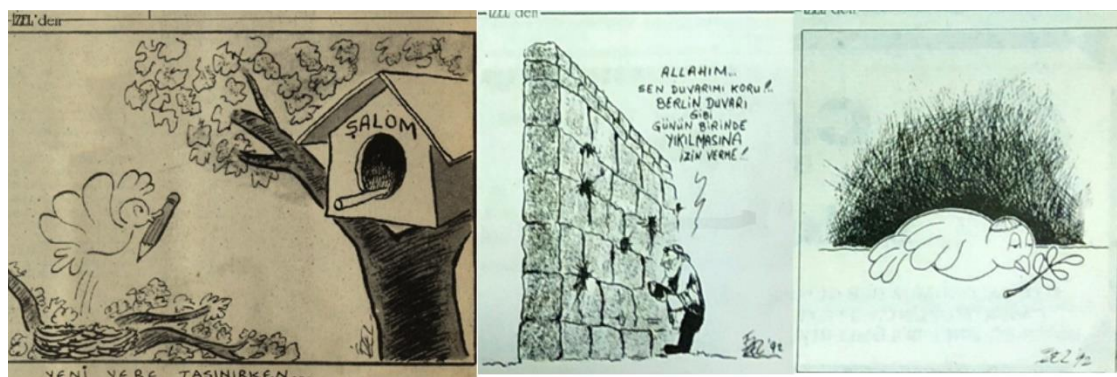


14<sup>th</sup> April 1993

9<sup>th</sup> December 1992

8<sup>th</sup> October 1992

**Image 25:** Cartoons: Focus on Continuous Hope for Peace



First, the newspaper published on October 8, 1992, on the right side focuses on the meetings of the two countries in conflict, Syria and Israel, in the United Nations, while the editorial cartoon sheds light on the bird's tiredness in its search for peace and the darkness of the future. After the semiotic analysis, the perception

and identification of the operation on the denotative level shed light on the bird used as a metaphor for the writers in *Şalom* who spend efforts to support the peacebuilding activities around the world with a continuous hope that peace will be achieved around the world; nevertheless spatial, temporal and the psychological inference on the connotative level put focus on the branch that is bent down which is used as a metaphor for the failure in these peacebuilding activities. On the other hand, the news keeps reporting about the approach to peace shortly. Some of the captions are as follows: “Syria-Israel summit at the UN” According to the news, as a surprise development, at the Middle East Talks, which were suspended until October 21, it has been reported that Israeli Prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Syrian President Hafez Assad will start negotiating in the coming days. Another caption reports the ceremony for the 500th anniversary organized in Australia. According to the news, the Australian Jewish community, The Australian Federation for Sephardic Jews and the New South Wales Sephardic Organization formed a committee to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of Jews from Spain. The newspaper sheds light on the antisemitic actions that concern Germans with the news of Washington Post from Oranienburg. According to the news, German Foreign Affairs Ministry’s officials stressed that increasing racist and antisemitic events would harm the image of a united Germany and damage the local political and social environment. The contrast between the editorial layout that puts a particular focus on the fact that a peaceful atmosphere where all the parties involved work in perfect harmony is soon to be achieved and the cartoon in “Tünelin Ucu” corner where the bird as a metaphor for peace is tired and has a sad expression on its face as it is about to lose hope.

Second, the edition published on December 9, 1992, focuses on the peace meetings that started over, while the editorial cartoon on the front page uses the Jewish man who prays in front of the demolished wall for the latter's survival. The irony between the demolished wall and the illusion of the Jewish man depicts the irony between the peacebuilding activities and their constant failure. Moreover, it implicitly refers to the obscurity in future. The semiotic analysis, the perception and identification of the operation on the denotative level, shed light on the Jewish man

praying in front of the Western Wall hoping that the wall will survive, which is ironic since the wall has already collapsed. Spatial, temporal and psychological inference on the connotative level focus on the fact that the Jewish man is in an illusion and continues hoping for the wall's survival, which is used as a metaphor for hope. The cartoon criticizes that although humanity continues to hope for peace, the process has already collapsed. Some of the captions on the front cover are as follows: "Quincentennial Celebrations in Canada" According to the news, Naim Güteryüz gave a series of lectures in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. As the Vice President of the Quincentennial Foundation in Turkey, he was invited to Canada by the Federation of Turkish Associations to give a series of conferences. The event ended with a tour of the "Turkish Jews and 500 years of harmonious life" exhibition. "Peace Talks Start Over" is another caption on the same front cover that sheds light on the Middle East Peace talks that started again in Washington on December 7, 1992, after the new US president was elected. The contrast between the editorial layout on the front cover with a focus on the peaceful atmosphere that seems to exist between the countries and the cartoon in "Tünelin Ucu" where the Jewish man is in the illusion of the acceptance of his prayers in front of an already demolished wall is again significant in the sense that the cartoon continues to hold an opposite stance against the editorial point of view.

Lastly, the editorial cartoon in the newspaper edition dated April 14 1993, on the left side, makes it explicit that hopes for peace exist independently of circumstances and consequences. After semiotic analysis, the perception and identification of the operation on the denotative level shed light on the bird with the kippa, which is used as a metaphor for Jews and carries the message that although the future looks dark, peace can be established around the world. Spatial, temporal and psychological inference on the connotative level focused on the darkness of the future, and the tired expression on the bird's face is used as a metaphor for humanity getting tired of searching for peace. "Ambassador Gökçe visited Chief Rabbi" is the caption on the front cover. According to the news, Onur Gökçe, Turkey's Ambassador of Israel, visited Chief Rabbi of Turkish-Jewish minority, David Asseo in his residence. During his visit, Chief Rabbinate's Deputy executive officer Aaron

Habip as well as protocol and official affairs officer Hayim Eliezer Kohen assisted Chief Rabbi. Another caption from the front page is the news that sheds light on the Holocaust Victims. According to the news, The Memorial Day of Warshaw Ghetto, commemorated in the Synagogues every year to remember 6 million Jews massacred by the Nazis around the world, will be held on Sunday, the 18th accompanied by a memorial prayer at the Yüksekaldırım Aaskenaz Synagogue in İstanbul. The fact that pro-Iranian militants attacked ten Israeli positions while Hezbollah militants fired with rifles was reported by the caption as “Hezbollah attacked Israel Positions” 140 Lebanese civilians died and Israel suffered heavy losses.

Although the front pages of Şalom have been demonstrating that humanity continues to hold their hopes that peace will be established around the world, the editorial cartoons shed light on the fact that it is getting more and more challenging to keep this hope alive.

The examination of Şalom’s front pages and the editorial cartoons on the first page shows that despite changes in the attitudes of the minority and the newspaper over the years, Rozental’s attitude had remained the same since 1991 when he first started to draw cartoons for Şalom. However, this does not mean that Rozental intellectually stayed still over the years. On the contrary! Rozental tends to go outside the editorial frame to make sharp observations of the world, sometimes pushing the limits of the newspaper’s stance. Though he focused on various issues, the artist focused on the criticism of the diplomacy conducted in times of war and did not hesitate to criticize foreign policies that aim at establishing peace between the countries. He believes that the authorities prioritize their concerns rather than aim to achieve peace around the world. In this sense, he finds humanity corrupted, which is why diplomacy fail to find the solution to existing problems. As has been the case in the period between 1992–1994 after the Gulf War started, the time frame that this dissertation concentrated on, while Şalom claimed diplomacy conducted by the governmental authorities seemed to spend efforts to stop the war in the Gulf as well as Bosnia in the same period, in comparison with the news that takes place

on the front covers of *Şalom*, the editorial cartoon continues to put forward the criticism both on the connotative and denotative levels. Although *Şalom*'s communication style has changed over the years to fit into the social and political climate of the period, its hope that peace will be established worldwide continued. The fact that Rozental's cartoon corner "Tünelin Ucu" has remained on *Şalom*'s first page since 1991 shows that the minority has unceasingly supported criticism of diplomatic communications and actions that purport to achieve peace.

In other words, although the continuous hope for peace exists as long as humanity exists, foreign policies are unsuccessful in achieving the establishment of peace throughout the world because human beings are corrupted in the sense that they take their priorities into concern rather than getting focused on the common wellbeing of the latter.

## CONCLUSION

Minority media contribute to maintaining cultural identity, traditions and language, empower minority groups and open up linkages to diasporic connections and affiliations (Tsagarousianou, 2002). They offer competing versions of a group identity, establish connections between the mainstream media and contribute to the emergence of different levels of the public sphere. (Yanardağoğlu, 2013) The first and major line of inquiry is based upon the invisibility, underrepresentation, and misrepresentation of minorities in the mainstream news media (Larrazet 2014). Thus, multidisciplinary approaches to the media productions by ethnic, racial and religious groups contribute to reconceptualization and redefinition of national identity, minority identities and individual identities. Academics highlighted the role of minority media in furthering and supporting democracy and participating in the public sphere and strong vectors of collective representation and mobilization (Rigoni, 2014) As Larrazet and Rigoni (2014) shed light, as a result of the use of information, minority media can be seen as an indicator of a transcultural way of life informing the audience of the culture of the minority on the one hand and culture of the society in general on the other hand. In that sense, minority media contribute to the emergence of different levels of the public sphere (Yanardağoğlu, 2013)

This dissertation draws from the minority newspaper of Jewish community to reveal communication and intervention strategies through the first page of the newspaper. A multilayered analysis of Şalom as a minority media through the front cover news at four different marking points in the history points to the changes in editorial preferences of the newspaper in relation to the national and international politics, relationship with the Israel, censorship and political pressures. The analysis of Tünelin Ucu, the corner of editorial cartoon, and the interviews with İzel Rozental, the cartoonist constituted a space for the continuous critique of various issues such as government policies, corruption, war, human security, international politics, and living conditions.

Şalom's communication style between 1947 and 1992 revealed that the minority was self-enclosed. In the first period, during 1947–1960, newspaper articles were written in Ladino. The main issues and headlines in the news were primarily immigration occurrences in various countries. In addition, national events in Turkey dominated the news. In international news, the London Conference and Jewish-Arab Friendship were on the agenda. The news was released in the context of the current developments in Palestine. While Hanukkah news was also in the headlines, the wealth tax practice in Turkey was included. Between 1960 and 1970, the articles published were in Ladino and Turkish. In the headlines, religious holidays, the anniversary celebration of the newspaper, and immigration were shed light on. Immigration events were still in the news, as has been the case for immigration from Morocco. On the other hand, The General elections were one of the most important events on Turkey's timeline. Şalom published articles in Ladino and Turkish between 1970 and 1980, and political topics such as the Turkish prime ministerial elections stood out in the press during the era, while issues addressing antisemitism continued on the global agenda.

The second period I define started in 1992 with the establishment of the 500 Year Foundation and lasted until 2003. After 500 Year Foundation was established, many celebratory and commemorative events were organized. My research of the front pages of Şalom reveals that the space given to internal news in the newspaper was larger than the space given to foreign news. News of Israel relating to the minority were only reported they reflected well on the Turkish authorities. In addition, based on the examination of Şalom's headlines from this period, it was revealed that internal news items enjoyed bigger headlines than foreign and Israeli news items. This finding is quite significant: the second period marked the promotion of internal news over foreign and Israeli news.

The third period started with the bomb attacks on Neve Şalom Synagogue in 2003 and lasted until 2010. This was a period when the Turkish-Jewish minority was reminded of their identity and the need to prioritize the values they carried throughout 500 years. It was neither the first nor the last time an individual, a minority, or a population would be reminded of their core values when the latter

was on the edge of forgetting about them. During this third period, based on the research conducted on the front covers, Şalom allocated approximately equal space for internal, foreign and Israeli news concerning the Turkish-Jewish minority and the Republic of Turkey. The size of the headlines for internal, foreign, and Israeli news was approximately equal. On the other hand, with the introduction of color to the publication in the second period, Şalom grew into a full-color newspaper. Eventually, through content and the use of color, it aimed to appeal to a wider audience.

The fourth period started when the Turkish-Jewish minority prioritized their Judaic values. This period started in 2010 with the Mavi Marmara event, which prompted Turkish Jews to actively raise their voices and fight to find solutions to their problems and ended with the failed coup d'état in 2016. My research on the front covers established this, as Şalom allocated more space to Israeli news and minority issues.

As different from the news the editorial cartoons by Rozental constituted a space for the presentation of more radical ideas and criticism even though it opposed the newspaper's tone of communication at the time. Independent of the political agenda of the period and the specific time Şalom focuses on, Rozental does not hesitate to air his views in all categories. A Cartoon for Peace Association member, Rozental is a supporter of peacebuilding movements and uses humor to advance these efforts and criticize the authorities when they hold a stance against these peacebuilding activities. The fact that Şalom continuously maintained the cartoon corner, allowing the artist to express himself freely, was a significant sign that Şalom also used the editorial cartoons to criticize the national, global, and Israeli developments while keeping a neutral tone on the front page. I determined that the subject İzel Rozental (and therefore Şalom) put first was undoubtedly yielding for peace. I was fortunate to interview the artist and editor-in-chief multiple times. It analyzed Rozental's cartoons more deeply based on the semiotic approaches of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes. Analyzing Rozental's cartoons have enabled me to see what lies beneath their form and surface meaning.

I fully expect the analysis to be used by future researchers unsatisfied with what lies on the surface!

Editorial cartoons and humor have been among the important tools of critique. As a type of rebellion against authoritarian regimes, humor appears in many different forms. Political cartoons, photographs, videos, graffiti, tweets, Facebook messages, and even jokes told in everyday conversations are all revolutionary humor. In other words, humor can be used as a space of criticism to criticize the existing status quo. However, humorists who carry out these creative attacks might be considered dangerous. According to Karam (2012), their expressions might also be considered an act of criticism that is responded to with the utmost severity, often imprisonment and/or execution in authoritarian regimes.

After the detailed analysis of the cartoons Rozental drew on the front covers of *Şalom* between 1992 and 1994 on the category of diplomacy in war, the strong belief of the artist, consequently the newspaper, that although it seems like diplomacy in times of war is the concern of the countries worldwide, governments often act according to their benefits. They do not hesitate to risk their citizens' lives, which is the corruption concept I decided to underline regarding foreign policies. It is the second concept I needed to underline. Although the communication style of *Şalom* changed over the years to fit the social and political climate of the period, what stayed consistent was the hope for peace. The fact that Rozental's cartoon corner, "Tünelin Ucu", stayed on the first page of the newspaper since 1991 shows that the Turkish-Jewish minority, through *Şalom* and Rozental's cartoons, has not ceased to criticize diplomatic communications and actions that aim to achieve peace worldwide. Further research on the remaining editorial cartoon categories, such as security, living standards, economy, democracy, and foreign policy, to uncover the hidden meanings in Rozental's cartoons.

For decades, humor served as a space for criticism of the Turkish-Jewish minority, especially in times of heavy pressure, enabling it to express itself. Although I did not consider the reader in the cartoonist-cartoon-reader triangle within the scope of my analysis, this is also an important area for future studies.

Moreover, the alternative perspectives that Rozental offers can be considered instances of resistance. The question that needs to be answered is whether these alternative ways of looking at issues will take a dominant role or remain as individual and separate instances. Considering that these instances of criticism are only small bursts within a large system, it should be admitted that their lifespan is limited and that they do not have enough power to consolidate formal structures. In that sense, another important area for future studies is to evaluate the lifespan of these alternative ways of looking at the issues and to discuss the extent to which the instances of resistance offered by the editorial cartoon and, consequently, the newspaper reaches the audience.

It is also important to consider whether art has the power to counteract the dominance of realism, whether the artist can overcome the collective state of despair, and whether they can challenge political frameworks. Sarat Maharaj has argued that artists contribute to the production of social knowledge in faster and more lateral ways than any academic model, broader and more direct than any other political discourse. “With speed and insight, artists can identify new trends and uncover secrets that have barely emerged into the public consciousness” (Papastergidis, 2005). Accordingly, the significance of artistic knowledge is that it can form an imaginative understanding that allows open space for freedom. Especially in times of crisis and conflict, the artists are among the first to protest authoritarian regimes and propose alternative ways for relating to social issues that can succeed in making freedom of speech possible for minorities. I expect “Tünelin Ucu” to continue its publication and to be a space for the free expression of the views of the Turkish-Jewish minority through humor.

I profited greatly from examining Şalom from different perspectives, including news content, the allocation of publication space given to national, foreign, and Israeli news and the size and color of the headlines; this research helped me to examine events from different perspectives to be able to draw logical conclusions from them. My research on Şalom's front covers and the editorial cartoons gave me a new lens to evaluate news from broader and more objective

perspectives. It helped me to change my subjective viewpoints accordingly. In this dissertation, for the first time in the literature, I provided an objective analysis on the front pages of the most influential Turkish-Jewish media outlet, Şalom, and the editorial cartoons by Izel Rozental, to show what type of communication strategies Şalom uses and how minorities express their criticism in a multi-layered structure about the national and international developments.

On the other hand, it should be straightforward that although Şalom has been the voice of the minority, 90% of its share now belongs to the Chief Rabbinate. As a small minority with a small collective management institution, the newspaper should be in similar view with the decisions of the Chief Rabbinate's governing board. Further studies are needed to evaluate the Turkish-Jewish minority members' viewpoints regarding the extent they feel they have been expressed.

Although the front covers of the newspaper stay following the Chief Rabbinate's viewpoint regarding the country's political, social and economic agenda, independent of the institution's ownership, the cartoon in "Tünelin Ucu" corner feels free to express whatever the agenda mentioned above is.

The editorial cartoon refers to metaphorical codification and a satirical or humorous genre through which a cartoonist subtly informs, criticizes and entertains his audience (El Refaie, 2009). "Tünelin Ucu" corner on the front cover of Şalom continued to stay on the front cover since 1991 continued to inform, to criticize while entertaining to make the audience smile and/or laugh. It the country's political, social and economic agenda although independent of the editorial viewpoint. In that sense, cartoons, products of humor, transform aspects of people, events, emotions, and thoughts into unusual narratives through exaggerated drawings, sometimes supported by words.

The cartoon presents a space for a different way of expression where criticism is enabled, aiming to make the audience smile, laugh and think. Unlike a democratic state, an authoritarian regime will not allow any philosophy, ethos, or identity that differs from or criticizes the regime. In other words, freedom of expression exists. A sense of humor is considered dangerous, especially when

criticizing a regime and/or its authoritarian leader. While democracies exhibit an open and egalitarian sense of humor, humor produced in authoritarian states, as well as freedom of expression, is under tight control by the regime; thus, it is often coded, characterized by allusion, and concealed in some way. In this regard, as mentioned earlier, editorial cartoons serve the cartoonist to reach a wide audience by conveying complex messages with simple symbols and metaphors. They are also considered a tool for propaganda, opposition and resistance, a means for those who have been silenced to speak up. In addition, cartoons create images that convey cultural values, beliefs, and norms through devices that include connotation, repetition, transformation, comparison, similarity, absurdity, and acknowledgment of identity. More importantly, cartoons reflect on and interpret political, social, cultural, economic, philosophical, and psychological issues. Thus, editorial cartoons by İzel Rozental in "Tünelin Ucu" create a space for expressing the multi-layered and complex dimensions of the Turkish-Jewish minority. Viewed in four time periods, even though Şalom applied different strategies, the editorial cartoon on the newspaper's front cover provided continuity in terms of presenting criticism independent of the political and social agenda of the national and international atmosphere. In that sense, İzel Rozental's editorial cartoon constituted a space of criticism that challenged the editorial stance of holding the publication parallel to the spirit of culture and agenda of the authorities. Further studies on the reception and interpretation of the editorial cartoons can contribute to the discussion.

As I discussed earlier, a newspaper's editorial cartoonist interprets current events through the filter of his or her individual world experience and conscience to create cartoons that (generally) align with the perspective of the management and the readers.

Another aspect of editorial cartoons is to meld public opinion by simplifying complex ideological messages into easily understandable symbols and metaphors. They have a complementary mission along with the editorial columns of the papers. Caswell (2004) defines the functions of editorial cartoons in the process of "opinion-molding and opinion-reflecting." Cartoons can also be used to "advance the interests of the cartoonist, the editorial objectives of the newspaper publishing

it, and/or the interests of a politician or a political lobby group that supports the publication" (Mulanda and Khasandi-Telewa, 2014). Considering the latter, the editorial process and the editorial cartoonist are assumed to work cooperatively and eliminate the aforementioned risks. For example, İzel Rozental, the editorial cartoonist of Şalom since 1991, works cooperatively with the editor-in-chief Ivo Molinas. Although the artist states that he is happy to work in the newspaper and he and the editor-in-chief agree through mutual understanding, there are cases when Şalom editorial point of view differs from İzel Rozental's (Rozental, personal interview, July 7, 2020).

I observed that from the establishment of Şalom in 1947 until 1992, Turkish Jews chose to live as a self-isolating minority trying to keep good relations with the authorities. On the other hand, my research on Şalom's front pages showed that the newspaper devoted to foreign news and internal news. The space allocated to the national news, which informed the readers about economic, political, and sociological developments within the country, was greater than the space given to news of Israel related to the minority's issues. In addition to examining the percentages of space given to internal, foreign, and Israeli news, I investigated the newspaper's headlines size and color. I found that the size of the headlines given to news items concerning Israel was smaller than those relating to internal and foreign news items. I considered this finding quite significant: Israeli news would go unnoticed, whereas internal and foreign news would be promoted. This proves that Şalom's main concern has been reporting about national politics in Turkey, whereas Israeli politics has been its second priority compared to the national agenda. The minority believed that they would live in their comfort zone if they did not interfere in governmental issues and remained as silent as possible; they would then be able to lead their daily routines. Rather than involving outsiders, they preferred to find solutions themselves to problems that arose within the group. Facing the authorities and confronting them with the problems they endured as a minority were inconceivable; instead, they pretended they had no problems during this period.

As a member of the Turkish-Jewish minority, I felt a need to go deep into the history of Jews to understand the reasons behind their consensus of silence. In writing about the events that frightened and impacted the Turkish-Jewish minority, I tried to understand Turkish Jews remained silent on the one hand and unveil the minority expression through the multi-layered analysis of Şalom and the editorial cartoon on the other. In that sense, the silent position held by the Turkish-Jewish minority during the first period between 1947–1992 contributed to a redefinition of minority group identity: a self-enclosed attitude for the specific period.

Although researchers have not agreed on a concrete definition of humor, the aim of humor is to invite people to think critically about a subject while finding a point or detail that makes them smile or laugh. Furthermore, cartoons, products of humor, aim to transform aspects of people, events, emotions, and thoughts into unusual narratives through exaggerated drawings, sometimes supported by words. According to Greenberg, due to the power of the genre, cartoons permit the use of linguistic and non-linguistic cues to express the thoughts and points of view regarding socioeconomic and political issues through which social agendas are set. This is why there has been a growing interest in the field across various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, communication and education.

In accordance with Saussure, it has been argued that language always has to be realized through and comes in the company of other semiotic modes (Kress and Van Leuwen, 1998). The reader is supposed to acknowledge the complexity of cartoons posed by their semiotic sophistication. Cartoons stimulate the reader's mind by inviting them to decode what is depicted. As a result, when a reader laughs, it means that he or she has figured out the hidden meaning of the cartoon (Cover, 2009; Aviv, 2013).

In democratic regimes, politicians and the press often use humor to outline their political philosophy, relieve politically tense situations, address sensitive points without distressing society, or even acknowledge mistakes (Nilsen, 1990). Turkey, however, is far from achieving democratic goals and is not considered a place where humor can serve as a tool that brings politicians and the public together.

In authoritarian states, the elements of humor are only expressed in a manner that suits the leadership. The fundamental aspect that separates democratic regimes from authoritarian ones is the fact that in democracies, humor is used to acknowledge the incongruities, weaknesses, and mistakes using humor as a tool that brings the public and politicians together. According to Meyer (2000), the most exciting function of humor comes here in what Meyer calls a "jesting shield", which serves as a tool to challenge authority. In the cases of authoritarian regimes with limited space for oppositional philosophy, ethos or identity differing from or criticizing the regime are often considered dangerous. In contrast, freedom of expression in democratic states increases the severity of criticism.

As I discussed earlier, a newspaper's editorial cartoonist interprets current events through the filter of his or her individual world experience and conscience to create cartoons that (generally) align with the perspective of the management and the readers.

When Şalom's editorial point of view chooses to stay by the governmental authorities and would rather have a neutral tone not to encounter the authorities, the criticism is made through the help of the editorial cartoon "Tünelin Ucu" by İzel Rozentel. I scrutinized the newspaper's front pages and elaborated on four different periods, all of which ended with a particular event that served as a breaking point. I found that each period was underlined with a specific way of expression in accordance with the period's global and national agenda in addition to the attitude of the Turkish-Jewish minority towards a particular national agenda; the minority's efforts to get along with Turkish authorities have always played a significant role in shaping the way the minority groups communicated.

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**APPENDIX: 1 INTERVIEWS WITH IVO MOLINAS, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF ŞALOM AND IZEL ROZENTAL, CARTOONIST OF TUNELIN UCU CORNER SINCE 1991**

**INTERVIEW WITH İVO MOLINAS, September 1, 2019**

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, ŞALOM NEWSPAPER**

**Rakel Meşulam:** First of all, thank you very much, we will try to finish our interview in one hour. Or our question-and-answer session, our conversation, whatever we call it... We are doing this interview as part of a doctoral study. When we do a literature review, as is customary in doctoral studies; we notice that the media is divided into three main groups such as minority, ethnic, and community media. Different definitions are also used for these groups. Is there such a distinction for you when it comes to the Şalom newspaper? There are many ways to describe Şalom, but if you were to use one of these three terms, which would you consider appropriate for the newspaper?

**İvo Molinas:** There is no doubt that our newspaper is a minority newspaper. Judaism is not an ethnicity; we can rather call it a collaboration of both religions and different cultures. Therefore, Şalom newspaper is a minority newspaper, but perhaps its real definition will be revealed in the upcoming questions. My aim is to make this newspaper, which I have been the editor-in-chief of for about nine years, not only a medium for Jews, but for the wider community. By all means, our *raison d'être* is being Jews, but the main reason we publish this newspaper is to transform Şalom from being a newspaper read only by Jews to a newspaper read by a wider society...

We live in a difficult geographical area. Our most important goal is to provide readers with accurate and objective information about us. Therefore, I am trying to move this newspaper a little further toward becoming a national newspaper rather than a minority newspaper. Of course, Şalom will never be at the level of other national newspapers because, as I said, our reason for existence is Judaism, so it will be kneaded with Jewish news and Jewish culture. I am trying and will try

to make it a newspaper that has a Jewish frame but also touches on universal issues. In this sense, the best definition for Şalom will still be a minority newspaper.

**Rakel Meşulam:** What I am going to say now is entirely my personal interpretation and I would like to share it with you: You have celebrated Şalom’s 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this year it’s the 70<sup>th</sup>. You have published a book for these decades. When we look at the early years of Şalom, we can see that the Jewish community was more secretive, maintaining a stance like: ***“Let’s not show ourselves too much. Let’s not show off too much.”*** We see that he has a style stance. I have deduced this view from the newspaper itself, a little from the archives but also mainly from the books published.

In the following years, we see that the news you published came out with the statement ***“We are very happy to be here,”*** especially when we celebrated the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary (of the arrival in Türkiye of the Jews who were expelled from Spain) in 1992 and the Quincentennial Foundation was also established. When Ak Parti came to power, a completely different period began. After the synagogue bombings in 1983 and 2003, I see that there are different points of view such as ***“Are really happy or under the spotlight?”*** although I cannot distinguish them from each other, I think that all experiences have a great influence on this approach. In recent years, I believe that we are trying to be heard by spreading the message: ***“We are here, and we are expecting equal rights rather than tolerance.”***

The thing that caught my attention is these four different identities and the news that Şalom made over these identity definitions, with different expressions in the news. Editorials of the 1983 Neve Şalom Synagogue bombing were mentioning that “we buried our pain”. Whereas there were different expressions such as “We will not keep silent!” and “We will not surrender to terrorism!” in 2003 after the Neve Şalom was attacked again. As I mentioned, although the distinctions were not clear-cut, I came across such a distinction. Would you agree?

**İvo Molinas:** There are some nuances among the newspaper executives, this is right to a large extent. But first, let me say that the newspaper, organically belongs to the Chief Rabbinate, although they never interfered with our editorial approach or our financial scope. In that sense, we are an autonomous newspaper. With a financial arrangement made two years ago, 90% of the newspaper's shares, excluding 10%, were transferred to the Chief Rabbinate. In fact, it was a very natural thing to happen. What I want to say is that Şalom has always acted with an understanding of publication parallel to the spirit of the time and the general culture surrounding the Jewish community and its board of administrators. It was not possible for it to be otherwise, in other words, when we see the approach to the press in Türkiye today, when we observe what has been done in terms of democracy, we notice that, apart from a few exceptions, all newspapers, which we call the mainstream media, even the neutral ones, must update their publishing policy in accordance with the spirit of the time. Those before me (in Şalom) did not have to deal with this, and no one asked me to follow such a local editorial policy. We are a small community, and the community has a small administrative board. Şalom has always chosen to broadcast in accordance with the "low profile or high profile" perceptive in parallel with the decisions of the board. Especially starting from Bensiyon Pinto's period, there has been a change in the high profile and low profile. Then the approach of being a closed community, perhaps due to historical traumas, not interfering in the affairs of the state, not expressing our complaints too loudly, living behind closed doors all the time, and being constantly hesitant was left aside. A way of expressing who we are was chosen, not by fighting, but by contacting powerful people of the state and the government. At that time, we tried to make our identity more visible. Maybe this was also related to the celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Especially when we were celebrating our quinentennial anniversary, the Turkish people said, were astonished to see that Jews have lived in this country for over 500 years. Şalom newspaper was a newspaper that was read by three to five thousand people, that was not sold, that did not have technological facilities, with limited social media and so was considered to be a self-enclosed newspaper. Back then we were living in a country that did not know Jewish people

— in fact, it was the same thing in terms of the state. What happened then? As a result of these right attempts and choosing to speak loudly, a mutual communication process started with the highest levels of the state. With this, the Jewish identity became more visible, which brought with it a better expression of ourselves. All of this was reflected in Şalom as well. It was a very correct approach, a very accurate determination...From *“We buried our pain”* which was in line with the spirit of the time in 1983, we went to headlines like *“We will not surrender to terrorism”*, and *“We will not keep silent”* after the attack in 2003 attack, because the current environment allowed us to post such headlines. They were in a more accepting state of mind after we became more vocal compared to previous years. Şalom reflects this, but of course, there were different nuances among the administrators of the newspaper. Some tried to keep a lower profile, some were more critical, and some more conciliatory. The editorial policy of Şalom developed and changed in parallel with the evolution of the Turkish-Jewish Community’s administration and people’s perspective on Türkiye and the state.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You just said that Şalom is a newspaper that reaches a wider community, but how many people does it reach in total? I recall that there is a subscription-based system.

**İvo Molinas:** Yes, we have subscribers. It is the 95% subscription that ensures its continuity. The remaining 5% consists of copies sold in a few bookstores such as D&R or at some kiosks. Unfortunately, we do not have a very broad distribution network, sometimes we get requests about finding our newspaper in different cities, but let alone other cities, we are not able to sell it everywhere in Istanbul. We have close to 3000 subscribers and 2500 of them are from the Jewish community. Of course, with this number of subscribers, remaining loyal in periods like this is quite difficult. Youngsters are no longer interested in newsprint. In fact, we also have a very apolitical youth, who prefers not to read newspapers. There is already a reaction against printed material. We also publish the newspaper online, and we renew our publication every day, the entire newspaper is there. We also add fresh news every day, we tell them to read it from here, it’s free. This does not

contribute to us financially or morally in any way. That's where the community stands. Of course, we tried to keep our advertising revenue. The Jewish community is declining, the youngsters don't read, what could we do? Of course, we had to find other readers. Who were those readers? First, we thought: We do not choose those who are close to us, but those who feel close to us or want to know about us. We sought a formula for reaching intellectuals, universities, and academics. Of course, the internet has helped us a lot in this regard. Together with our website, we observe that there are 60,000 hits per week, the minimum and maximum numbers for our website are between 50 and 60 thousand.

This number sometimes rises to 70 thousand or 80 thousand. If there is interesting news that week, the number of readers is increasing. We know that almost all of them are readers from the wider society because Jewish people have a population of 15, 000. Let's say there are 4000 families, so 4–5 thousand out of these 60 thousand are Jewish people, and others are Turkish citizens living in Türkiye. 10% of this number is our readers living in the USA and Israel. In other words, there are 40,000 Muslim Turks who read the newspaper every week, or even if they don't, at least they visit our website. We have some statistical information. Currently, the length of time that the reader spends on our website is not very long, because we have a cultural and intellectual approach to writing, we are not like tabloids. This is also an important factor. Through Şalom, line, we found the formula for revealing our Jewish culture, identity, and social existence to the people of Türkiye. Now, thanks to the internet, we have started to get subscriptions from many different segments by using social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and advertising. Of course, all of these are from the wider society, and in a sense, our mission is to teach them Judaism correctly, to teach the culture, religion, lifestyle, and traditions of the Jewish identity through this newspaper. In the media, where there is a very manipulative kind of communication, we try to change that perception a little by eliminating this one-way disinformation as much as possible, while trying to keep positive and negative news. Our mission is to convey our own culture to a larger crowd. While making news about the Middle East and foreign policy, lately, most of the Turkish newspapers, from left to right,

have a great prejudice against Israel, so they only report the parts they want. Let me give a very short example: they say, “Israel attacked Gaza, so many people died...” but they do not mention what happened before the attack. Israel does not attack for no reason. Two or three missiles are fired from Gaza, people run to the shelters. In order to protect their citizens, Israel attacks back, even if it is sometimes nonproportional, but when we claim that Israel was bombed, we also tell our readers what happened before. However, in the mainstream media, the Turkish press only reports news of Israel’s attacks. They never say why it happened. In order to be a little more neutral, the sub-mainstream media says at the end of the news, one or two rockets were probably launched at Gaza after these bombings. The press does not even want to talk about Israel, let alone report it correctly. There is a great prejudice and antagonism against the Jews. In all public opinion polls, 65% of the community says they don’t want to see gays as their neighbors, and this is followed by the Jews. This research was made 4–5 years ago, if it were repeated today, the result would not change in my opinion. Another study revealed that 80% of those 64% had never known a Jew in entire their life. Since he does not know the Jew at all, he is afraid of him. Maybe they don’t want to be together or do not want them as neighbors because they never met them, they prefer to keep their distance. They might not want to be close to the Jewish people or be neighbors, I can understand that. But how can you want not to be neighbors if you do not even know them? Based on this fact, we have always tried to explain ourselves both in our relations with the government as an administration and through this newspaper. We received so much interesting feedback... “You are just as flesh and blood as we are. You also have sorrows, loves, betrayals, pains, financial problems, etc.” We get feedback saying, “I am ashamed to have spoken so badly of you, I would not have known if it was not for this newspaper, this article.” We know that our mission is to the point, but we need to do much more for it to reach its goal. You are misunderstood if you behave aggressively. You are faced with an antisemitic approach, you immediately become the representative of Israel in Türkiye. When you make your visibility a bit more aggressive in the newspaper, they shush you right away. You feel it. But we try to keep that balance with these direct reactions, our mission is to introduce the

Jewish identity correctly, by giving the natural identity codes of universal Judaism, from a cultural point of view, with a view to life with its traditions. The biggest problem of prejudice is misinformation and incomplete information. This creates hostility by inserting that wrong information into the community with a perception created by malicious people. We try to inform larger crowds correctly in order to break this hostility; both in terms of Judaism and in the name of fluctuations in Israeli-Middle Eastern politics.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Therefore, can we say that reaching a larger crowd is one of the most important pillars of Şalom's mission?

**İvo Molinas:** Yes, this is my biggest mission right now. The internet part and preparation that was not there before in the newspaper for the realization of this mission started with me. We achieve this by regularly asking our Muslim and non-Turkish-Jewish writers to publish articles in our newspaper. Thanks to these writers, different topics are included in the newspaper. Thus, thanks to our variety of writers, Şalom became not only the newspaper of the Jews but also the newspaper of the Muslim Turks.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Therefore, it is a process that will have a positive effect on the realization of the mission. I mean these writers who recently started to publish. I want to go back to the Turkish-Jewish community. You just said that there were different voices, that different articles were criticized by different sections of the community, and that you looked at it very positively, which means that there was a wide-ranging understanding of journalism. When you look at the reactions from the Turkish-Jewish community, how much do you think you reflect their voices? In other words, do they welcome this mission of the newspaper with respect? Apart from this, can the Turkish-Jewish Community also have a voice? You can respond to this in comparison with the criticisms received, you can say with your personal interpretation. Is it really a newspaper that expresses this segment of the population, because you just said that Şalom belongs to the Chief Rabbinate, and therefore goes in parallel with them financially and morally?

**Ívo Molinas:** Good question. The community definitely has a critical approach because there is no risk in that criticism. Especially within the recent political and cultural climate of Türkiye, the government or the newspaper will develop its own politics as a result of a newspaper that is seen in the public opinion, and the administration will naturally feel obliged to be the voice of the community, but it may not do this with the harshness of the people on the street. Because that harshness will backfire and this time, we lose all that we have achieved. Therefore, we need to handle this policy very carefully, maybe we need to filter it, but this does not mean that we should not word our complaints or what we find wrong. This is said, but perhaps not so much in public. But it was never said before, now it is said, but maybe in one-to-one relationships, but in relationships with the right people, and in the right politics, in relationships that go up to the highest level, all of our voices are being conveyed there. But of course, the community may want it to take a more radical, more vocal approach, which raises our own complaints. But as I said, the newspaper may not have responded to their full voice in this sense. But for example, in a public opinion poll conducted in Türkiye or in the research conducted in developed OECD countries, if we headline that antisemitism is the highest in Türkiye, publishing “Türkiye has become the champion in antisemitism!”, this is actually a reaction that we did not have before, but an indicator in the direction the community wishes to proceed. Because it is a fact that many headlines have come back to us critically from many different sources. “Why did you hit so hard?” or “Why do you have to tell the truth so much?” Some even said. From Jewish and non-Jewish people, even from our administration. It was a fact. Words that people find attractive, that people lust...If we said “Türkiye is the champion in antisemitism” so that readers and ratings increase. But this also means that antisemitism has risen in Türkiye, it also means that Türkiye is among OECD countries with antisemitism. But when you say Türkiye became the champion, you are using street language. In that sense, we can be the people’s voice. But of course, everyone has different problems, they have different expectations from the community. This newspaper may not have been the voice of those expectations, but we cover 95% of the antisemitic discourses against Jews in our newspaper. That is,

we always put the antisemitic discourse, including ministers, governors, mayors, and journalists, in the way that the rhetoric is in the newspaper, sometimes in small and sometimes big prints, in accordance with the political mood of that week. Now, in that sense, we may not be the exact voice that the community wants, but within my own administration, I can say that the existential problems of this newspaper with Türkiye and the existential problems of this newspaper with the Turkish society or the state (which is primarily antisemitism and discrimination in general) are the voice of the newspaper. But as I said, maybe this is not done in a very radical sense. A careful move is made to prevent a reverse reaction, like a chess move, but an action that was not taken before is now being taken.

**Rakel Meşulam:** While expressing, we sometimes use harsh words at the level of radicalism desired by the community, usually we try to be more restrained by looking at the reactions that may come from outside.

**Ivo Molinas:** The public sees our complaints. By using the word “antisemitism” so much, we placed this word in Turkish writing history through our newspaper and the internet. It was always called anti-Jews, not antisemitism because it is a foreign word. People now use the word antisemitism more easily. Even this shows that we are actually heading toward our mission. But we cannot say that people always think right. Of course, the newspaper will have a voice, but we know that thoughtless reactions backfire and come back like a boomerang. It is the same thing in our private lives, every time we get angry, every time we show a radical reaction, this brings us more harm than good, so we have to be careful.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Well, I’m going one step further. Voices raise, you hear voices; you mentioned this. We may not be able to voice all the sounds. Is this what the community believes? Yes, this is a newspaper that makes our voices heard! Have you done any research on this?

**Ivo Molinas:** No, we did not conduct a public opinion poll, but let me tell you this: Sometimes we receive criticism from those who do not find this newspaper religious enough (which is a great injustice. We publish at least two pages on Jewish traditions on every high holiday and reflect the atmosphere of a religious

community). But sometimes we get reactions from the religious ones, whether we include secular news, report some issues from the Orthodox Jews, keep our Muslim writers, work on hold meetings on Shabbat, etc. Then we realize that we are not their voice. But this newspaper is the only newspaper of a cosmopolitan 15,000–16,000 Jews! There is a huge spectrum from the most secular to the most religious. We cannot be just a religious or just a secular newspaper, then we become the voice of the community, the only voice. Our publishing policy aims to bring everyone together on common points. We celebrate our holidays, but while we celebrate them, we do not include radical religious fatwas, we have some red lines. Sometimes there are articles that violate kashrut rules, which we try to stop, but sometimes it happens. Sometimes we publish news about mixed marriages of our own employees. Sometimes this is seen as a big threat, so we can't be the voice of those who are totally against mixed marriages, we are judged even when we say "we wish you all the happiness" to a couple among our staff. By wishing them happiness, they conclude that my son or my daughter could be happy in the same kind of relationship. There is also a voice that says "I am protesting this policy of this newspaper", but if we only try to keep this voice low, we will lose the other readers. Therefore, if we were the newspaper of solely Orthodox Jews, it would be different, if it was the newspaper read only by secular leftists, we would be voicing other ideas. But our publishing policy respects the common red lines of the whole community and then becomes liberated with nuances. In that sense, it is practically impossible for everyone to have a voice.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So, we come back to the same point. By getting various reactions, I think you are confirming that you have an understanding of journalism in a wide range. Well, we've talked about opinions, I'm going to ask if there is a public opinion poll again. But this time, on age, gender, occupational group, and education group, that is, what is the average age among the readers, and what is the gender? Is there such research?

**İvo Molinas:** We did not do this, but we understand from the feedback from our surroundings and here and there that Şalom has always been known as the

newspaper of grandparents, and we could not break this judgment. We tried to make different pages with various topics such as cinema, theatre, education, health, and economy. For our economics circuit, we asked Prof. Emre Alkin to write articles. While he does publish in any other newspaper, he accepted to write for us. We touch on topics such as health, literature, cinema, philosophy, children's education, and culture, which do not concern the Jewish community but attracts the attention of the universal readers. I do not want to brag about how much we have worked and changed the image of Şalom from being the newspaper of Jewish grandparents. Everyone says that there have been some radical changes thanks to this policy we have made. It has become very modernized, and very dynamic, and we touch on very different subjects, but still, it remained intellectual, as the trend is for young people not to read newspapers. We see that people over the age of 60+ read this newspaper more. General criticism, praise, feedback, suggestions, and guidance, it's all coming from the generation over 60. I do not discriminate between men and women because the 60-year-old generation is all the same in that sense, but young people do not read. We acknowledge this. Unfortunately, in some houses, those blue envelopes are never opened. Because people don't have that much time, especially these days. Everything changes so fast! In the evenings, people spend hours at home on TV shows, but no one cares to open the cover page of a Şalom and says, "What happened in the Jewish Community this week!" Dozens, I don't mean hundreds (because it would be very hurtful) but there are dozens of such unopened envelopes. We even made a 15-minute film promoting Şalom for its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a short documentary. Selim Kaneti — I don't know if you know him — worked hard on it. Interviews were made with both our own staff and our readers, and it was a film that tells the history of Şalom, its 70-year history, narrated by a strong Turkish voice, with very generic graphics, music, etc. One of the questions we asked our readers was: "What is the color of our envelope?" There were those who could not say "blue", there were those who said "gray", and there were subscribers who remembered the color it was ten years ago. Therefore, the newspaper may be sent to the workplace, not brought home from the workplace, or it is not thrown away but is not opened either. The news goes stale unless it is

opened, and it is not readable when it gets stale. Although, 50% of the newspaper is full of articles that do not get stale. So I specifically asked this question. Because we know that these envelopes are not opened in many homes or workplaces. Therefore, we cannot fight it, because it is something related to the intellectual profile of our Jewish community. I don't know if it would be read more if we made it more tabloid-like, or would it be read if we made it more philosophical and more cultural? Maybe it wouldn't have been read at all, but if we publish a photo of a wedding on the first page, it would definitely be read more, but it should not be within our scope. When we look at Şalom, we see that it is a political newspaper, that is, it is about the community. Of course, there are issues that touch everyone, that are not entirely political, think about child abuse, child abuse is the topic of the day.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I can't comment much, but a careful eye can see that it has a different content.

**İvo Molinas:** Yes, they can, but they don't take the time to understand it. Then you can't understand. So, this is our problem. That's why I paved its way to a larger crowd so that it survives as much as possible so that the number of subscribers does not decrease. Non-Jewish people subscribe to this newspaper willingly. No one would say: "I don't read it, but I subscribe to support them," that would make them look at it with a very condescending eye. These subscribers are both useful and useless for me: useful because at least Şalom lands in their house, and they have an opportunity to glance at it. It also provides financial support: The subscription fee is around 250–300 TL per year, but it's not commonly read. So, if you ask your friends around, the number of readers will not exceed 10%. That's the average. There is very little time to take Şalom seriously and read an article, and then give some feedback: 3–5 times a week maybe, but I would expect more. But we are a community that does not read, I mean in general terms! Not economically, but our intellectual profile is on the same level as Türkiye's average, considering that Türkiye's average is already low. After all, we are not a literate crowd compared to the European average. Şalom is not a tabloid either; in other words,

we are interested in the issues that the thinking person, the concerned sensitive person is interested in. There are child education or child abuse issues. We publish that too. What does it have to do with Şalom, you might say? You could say it was a Jewish child molested. Not in that sense! In general. Because this is a universal nuisance! Jewish people are also sensitive to universal issues. Are we just going to deal with the troubles and egoism of our own community? No, quite the opposite! Then you are already excluding yourself. You exist with your own problems and your own agenda. No! We have to deal with the problems of the entire humanity. A universal Jew has done this. For this, he improved in science, art, and music. These people wouldn't be famous if they were self-conscious. Of course, we can find the sociological reasons for the distress in the Turkish-Jewish Community, but unfortunately, we are trying to educate a community that does not read. We are trying to publish different issues with a variety of themes. A person who loves movies should read Viktor Apalaçi: There is incredible information in his articles. In the art section, there are articles on marginal theatres. There are articles by Erdoğan Mitrani, which have not been published in any other newspaper in Türkiye. He writes about a few marginal theaters of Beyoğlu every week. He writes about big plays once in a while. These people became famous thanks to our newspaper and started being selected for juries. They earned a reputation here. In short, we are a community that does not read (there are those who read for free on the internet), so in parallel with our mission, we expanded our vision and reached out to the larger crowd.

**Rakel Meşulam:** And that's a very good mission. You used the definition "the newspaper of grandparents" suitable for the age of sixty and above — and I don't know if this has changed — but this is the first time I've heard such a thing personally because I don't know how much my grandparents were reading. But Şalom would definitely come to our house and my father would definitely read it. I worked in Şalom in 1985, but you weren't there yet. We also have a photo in the archive book, so cute! So, are there any studies aimed at young people? OK, there are many different topics such as cinema and theater, but what did you do to involve the young generation?

**İvo Molinas:** But what did we do? For instance, we published a sports page, Yıldırım Sports Club used to have basketball games on that sports page — yes, I used to make that news. They do not exist anymore. My father was on the administrative board of Yıldırım back then. We found a couple of really good writers. We wanted young people to at least make an entrance to journalism with sports, otherwise, they would not prefer the cinema or theater. We try to make them read newspapers, at least by including them, but other than that, we do not make a special effort for young people to read, because unfortunately, this is a very meaningless effort. I am not sure whether someone who does not read *Hürriyet* reads a Jewish newspaper just because he is a Jew. There is a problem of belonging here: Some youngsters see their Jewish belonging in a different way, see it in discourses, and show it in ontological and existential approaches, but I don't know if there are any young people who say, "I am Jewish, that's why I read *Şalom*," and show a sense of belonging. This may be our mistake, our shortcomings. What can be done to make young people read more newspapers? I think we can get young people to read more newspapers by changing the content and getting young writers. Sports articles read by young people — which are very original articles — not just sports competitions. We are a weekly newspaper. We publish more scientific and analytical articles. 10 writers of the sports page are between 19 and 27 years old. Apart from that, it is not easy to ask young people to write about Israel, or philosophy and traditions in this newspaper. Maybe we are lacking something, but when we look at the general trend, how can we make youngsters read this newspaper in a period when the newspaper reading rate is so low? There is also that perception: it is still the newspaper of grandparents. We tried to survive. We celebrated our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with great splendor, we made our advertisement somehow. Other than that, I don't see much we can do, but that can be our shortcoming. When we look at the general perspective, what does *Hürriyet* do to improve itself? It tends more towards the internet. It advertises photos of half-naked women on the Internet. It directs the youth to the internet with games and various topics. We do it more conventionally. We want to maintain our quality level.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I want to talk about the media industry: Where is Şalom standing, how are the relations with other media organizations? I will switch to the reporters from there. Is there such a relationship mechanism, or are you all by yourself?

**İvo Molinas:** No, especially with me, I always declared an open policy. The newspaper's policy of opening up is both in terms of content and in terms of the relations we have established. I became friends with lots of famous journalists, from Ertuğrul ÖZKÖK to Aslı AYDINTAÇBAŞ... At the moment, I am in close contact with both the writers of the pro-government newspapers, which we call the pool media (the word pool media is not good), because we need to be in contact with all of them. Therefore, Şalom is a respected newspaper today.

In conclusion, it is not an anti-Islam newspaper that they like. I'm talking about the mainstream press. Therefore, at the state level, they sometimes invite Şalom to press conferences; sometimes they don't. I don't know how these changes. Yesterday, for example, someone from the governor's office who had relations with the press called and asked: "Why do we never see you? I was told you were elected editor-in-chief." The governorship invited me to the 29 October reception. Şalom has definitely a place here. It's good for our relations; just as I still said, we are not prime quality because we have minority newspaper status. We are not invited to every press conference. But no minority newspaper is invited, not just Şalom, because we are still a foreign entity to them, a core. Some of those strong prejudices have not been broken yet, but of course, they are not as thick as they used to be. But as I said, they include Şalom in some political party meetings, it exists in the parliament, it is in the parliamentary library, no one forced them to do it, they have a newspaper network there, and they added Şalom to this network. What I couldn't achieve was to include it in the stand of Turkish Airlines at the airport. That was a social wound. Everyone, especially the president of the community is trying but we were not able to succeed. *Agos* newspaper is there though. In a stand where *Agos* newspaper was selected — which is a Kurdish newspaper after all — we always find it strange that Şalom is not among them. All our requests are always left

unanswered. They would say: “We are dealing with it, don’t worry.” But we think that there is a political decision involved. In other words, the reaction that Şalom newspaper would create was something they could not handle. Why are you bunching the Zionist newspaper in airplanes or at airline stands? I asked colleagues from *Agos*, “How did they let you in?” They said, “The assassination of Hrant Dink was part of this trade, otherwise we are a newspaper that opposes them more than you do,” They may be right. Even if not as much as before, *Agos* is a freer newspaper. A newspaper that can criticize the government more easily! We only criticize when there is antisemitism involved, but other than that, we do not take a critical stance toward the government. After all, it’s a newspaper published because it belongs to the Jewish Community. But we weren’t able to place it on Turkish Airlines’ newspaper stands. That was our failure in that sense. Once, the mayor of Üsküdar called all the journalists, on Journalists Day (most of them were their advocate newspapers) and they invited Şalom too, the mayor called me... “Is *Agos* invited?” I asked. “No!” they said, “We didn’t see them fit, you are a better fit.” Therefore, we actually have interference everywhere, but the acceptability/unacceptability may change according to the time of the day and the spirit!

**Rakel Meşulam:** How are your relations with other minority media? For example, you just mentioned *Agos*.

**Ivo Molinas:** Not many meetings happen! For example, we have a meeting here next Tuesday. We will invite them. We will be inviting all the Armenian and Greek newspapers. We are five or six altogether. But you may ask, why are we inviting them? Moris Levi asked for this. You know Moris Levi, is the president of the Congregation for minority foundations! We will hold a meeting in terms of communication among the newspapers on how we can convey our problems to the government, and it will be hosted by Şalom. In that sense, our relations are always good. The press association, that is the state helps us in terms of cash. Why? Because national newspapers in Türkiye are allowed to publish official advertisements given by the state because they meet certain criteria such as price,

number of employees, and so on. Of course, the state pays them good money, but since we, the minority newspapers, cannot fulfill the necessary criteria, none of us can benefit from the advertisements of the press association. It's not the case for Şalom, but a lack of funds, lack of resources would cause the destruction of one or two small newspapers. The Greek newspaper Apoyevmatini published for a community of 2000 people is about to disappear! So, the Press Association made an interim decision and only gave financial aid to minority newspapers, namely religious minority newspapers. Therefore, they relieve themselves of conscience every single year. But this is very good support indeed. They say: "We need to help not only minority newspapers but also local newspapers. If we pass a law, we should lend a helping hand to everyone, including thousands of local newspapers, but financially we are not in a position to help them." They made such a privilege only in terms of keeping minority newspapers alive. It has been going on for 4–5 years. So, there are some funds, some cash we receive from there, it's not bad. At least it's a favor in terms of showing the state's goodwill, in a way, they do not want us to perish.

**Rakel Meşulam:** As you just said, it is important that these newspapers survive! As a matter of fact, there are five or six newspapers that started their publication life with Şalom in roughly the same years...All of them are currently in the archives at the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Museum. Şalom, on the other hand, started to be published in the same years, and these are very well expressed in Rifat Bali's books. He mentioned in the last interview that Şalom should be shut down, you know — we all know his views!

On various occasions, in various environments, one of the questions that arise is, how do you look at this from your perspective? If we go back to the beginning, these newspapers were closed due to some economic reasons, a lack of communication among staff, etc. Some carried on. How did Şalom overcome this? In this question, I do not expect a historical projection from you. This has already been in archives, books, and shelves, from the perspectives of researchers. I'm curious about your opinion. After 70 years, you said, "I am the editor-in-chief of

the newspaper that continues its publication life for the longest time after the proclamation of the republic (Şalom was closed for a period only in 1983 during the time of Abraham DANON and resumed on after that). What do you attribute this success to? In fact, you mentioned this success step by step during your speech, I mean with the innovations you have made, the processes and strategies of your mission...But before I finish, I wanted to raise such a question.

**Ivo Molinas:** All these newspapers were personal initiatives, and those personal initiatives get blocked after a while, they are doomed to disappear unless they are institutionalized unless sell a lot of issues. Because at one point, it destroys you financially, so you need to put a lot of cash out of your pocket. They say that Abraham Danon spent a lot of money out of his pocket on the newspaper, although it was not published regularly.

I think the biggest factor in keeping this newspaper alive is that the Chief Rabbinate took it over. Of course, this is not enough either. But when the Chief Rabbinate took over, he also knew how to find the best person in the community for this job and appoint him to the newspaper. Management is important because you pick a man from a pool, but personal newspapers don't have such a possibility. Your family will continue the business, or you will hire a professional with your own money, which is also a major cost, but the Chief Rabbi has tried to find the best people to bring this newspaper. The Chief Rabbi, the administrators of the community, the heads of active associations, and the members of that associations had a great impact on the administration of the community. In the 90s and 2000s, he took the most knowledgeable people and channeled them into this newspaper somehow. I think that the newspaper lives on thanks to the ability to find the best people who could take this job under the paternity and ownership of the Chief Rabbinate and to bring them here. There is also the bulletin of the Association of Turks in Israel, which also broadcasts in this context, and another bulletin that is published under the name of "Friend". Both have finalized their publishing life. Currently, the bulletin, which is the publication organ of the Turkish Association has come to an end — I guess they are solely online — I know that it has not been

published anymore. I think “Friend” is not on the internet. The Turkish People’s Association — the former editor-in-chief of the newspaper is managing it — is trying to expand the website, so it’s now a newsletter trying to live entirely on the internet! Before I came, I didn’t look at the website — I didn’t know, I’ll look into it, too — they all disappeared in terms of a printed newspaper. I think that the reasons for its disappearance are similar — namely, not being institutionalized, not being able to bring good administrators, not having a good governor, and the fact that there are processes that continue with personal initiative, and of course, the economic issues: the decrease in the rate of printed newspapers, in general, is also a very big factor.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Going back to Şalom, I want to ask my last question without tiring you any further. How the existence of minority media affects the perspectives of minorities and their relations with the community in which they live? There are very different views on the positive/negative sides: One view among many states that the continued existence of minority media causes minorities to claim their own identities, but to some extent, they are isolated from society. You said that one of your missions was to go beyond this and not only tell the larger society who the Jews are but also become a publication that increases integration with the idea that the larger society can come in and see who the Jew is.

**İvo Molinas:** Let me make a summary, as I said, the concept of minority newspaper is a factor that alienates minorities from the larger society in a sense — and because I can read this factor very well, and because I know that there is an antisemitism towards the Jews in Türkiye or hostility towards this community (from not knowing the Jews well) I tried to keep the balance between them. In other words, we are a minority newspaper, but we also are the newspaper of a community that is always in constant contact and integration with the larger society. Therefore, we talk back from the mirror of universal humanism: we are human, and our religions and ethnic origins may be different, but we must be people walking towards the same goals, walking on universal objectives, so let’s work with you, read us, we are reading you. The best definition of secularism is that everyone lives

his/her own religion, but in the universal sense, everyone is equal, and together — being a friend or foe is a different issue.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I haven't looked into other minority papers in great detail, but I'm sure you have a bit more insight on this.

**Ivo Molinas:** Only Agos newspaper is acting with this mentality. This was a process that started with us, they also have always included Turkish Muslim writers in their staff. But they have not become as rich as we are in thematic capital. I can easily say that they started their culture and art columns after us, and certain pages have news about Türkiye's general problems. But no one wants to read from *Agos*, they sometimes publish the conflicts with the Kurds in their articles, just in order not to be indifferent to Türkiye's problems. We did not find it necessary, because everyone is already doing it. We publish these as news, but these problems are discussed in our articles... So Agos is the closest to Şalom, but we are even ahead of them in this regard. But Agos has a good public image. Leftists, liberals, and Armenians have always felt closer to them than the Jews. This is a historical and social fact. Of course, Hrant Dink's efforts are undeniable. Hrant Dink's political stance was given to them too! Leftists and liberals have always been on the side of Agos. As I said, Şalom has perhaps somewhat surpassed the image of a secluded Jewish newspaper, but not fully. Leftists and liberals are still baffled by the headlines we sometimes publish. An unexpected headline from Şalom, maybe in a positive sense. Because their prejudices are broken. In that sense, Agos is read by leftists, it is read by liberals, and it seems more respectable than Şalom. The one weakness of Şalom is that it is a Jewish newspaper. For leftists, Judaism and Israel have always been critical issues since 1967. Leftists supported Israel until 67, and even state institutions supported it because of the Holocaust; fascism has been fought. There was a struggle against Hitler, and they found the establishment of Israel very legal and right. But after 1967, the Arab wars intensified again, and Israel lost all its leftists after Israel took new lands. Leftists became hostile to Israel, and nothing has changed until today. Palestine is seen as the victim, Israel is evil, barbarian, etc. Şalom is being crushed under this image and prejudices.

There is an exhibition in the Tobacco Warehouse: When we say plural press, there are not only minority press, but also Laz, Circassian, Abaza, and Kurds, periodicals published by them, and it is a great exhibition. All four or five newspapers are there, they made a video shoot, they include me too, and there was an installation where my five minutes interview was broadcast.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Thanks a lot for everything.

I have interviewed İzel Rozental four times; on October 20, 2019; July 7, 2020; May 17, 2021; and January 21, 2022.

### **INTERVIEW WITH IZEL ROZENTAL, October 20, 2019**

**Rakel Meşulam:** First of all, I would like to thank you for sparing me some time, in this busy pace of yours. As I just mentioned, we are conducting this interview within the scope of Bilgi University's communication faculty. You have been drawing "The End of the Tunnel" since 1991. In fact, there was such a column in the newspaper when Şalom was established in 1947, but then we see it disappeared until 1991. Do you have any comments on this point? Why did it start again with you in 1991?

**İzel Rozental:** As far as I know, the reason for restarting is a request from the administration of that day. There was a lady before the editor-in-chief, Silvyo Ovadya.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Süzet Sidi?

**İzel Rozental:** Yes, Süzet Sidi. At that time, some breakthroughs were made and Şalom suddenly took on the identity of a newspaper again, becoming a weekly newspaper. Then comes Silvyo Ovadya and he embarks on a renewal movement, but in 1991 something very important happens. The Gulf war begins. Meanwhile, as far as I understand, there is collaborative work among Şalom staff. Everyone wants to do something; they want to improve the quality of the newspaper. They notice that the comic strip, that is, the editorial cartoon, is missing. By chance, a friend who knew me, was on the administrative board and he's recommended me, and he has shown them a cartoon that I drew. It was my first cartoon about Saddam,

right at the beginning of 1991. I passed it to him and it was published. Back then there was no column called “The End of the Tunnel”, it was published as “from İzel”. I liked it very much, seeing my sketch on the cover page of a newspaper, even in a local, community newspaper, I could never think of being a professional because of my work and other pursuits. I just enjoyed it. The following week, I got a call from the newspaper, they asked me if my cartoon was ready, back then there was no internet so they told me they would come to pick it up. That’s how it started. I took a break in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week, as I never expected a continuance. This was the only week I took a break. After that, my cartoon was published every week on a regular basis.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You call it an editorial cartoon. You also use the definition of a political cartoon in your articles and your interviews. What is an editorial cartoon and what is a political cartoon for you?

**İzel Rozental:** An editorial caricature is published on the cover page of a newspaper; it does not have to be political but it must be up-to-date. It can also be social. A cartoon criticizing society for example. In other words, there should be an editorial in line with the perspective of the newspaper that day, parallel to their view.

**Rakel Meşulam:** And we call it an editorial cartoon. What about the definition of a political cartoon, do you see a difference between the two?

**İzel Rozental:** There is a limitation between the political cartoon and the editorial one. A political cartoon has no social aspect, that is, it is not very concerned with the social sense. It’s just political, I guess that’s the difference.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You sometimes draw political and from time-to-time editorial cartoons, right?

**İzel Rozental:** I call all of them editorial and place them under one umbrella.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You have a very good definition of this issue, in fact, you say that the word comes from Latin origin: “caricare”. And caricare carries something, so the cartoonist actually carries something. What are you carrying?

**İzel Rozental:** What am I carrying? (Giggles)

**Rakel Meşulam:** I read your interviews and liked this very much. First of all, your website is very extensive, it gives really wide-ranging information about you. And so are the writings on the back of your books. When I read them, I did not know that the word caricature comes from “caricare” and that it means burden. I liked it, so I started to analyze it in a different way. That’s why I wanted to get your opinion face-to-face.

**İzel Rozental:** I swear, I did not study the answer to this question last night.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Come on, we are chatting here.

**İzel Rozental:** A cartoon carries feelings, it carries opinions.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So, there is no limit to what a cartoonist can carry. You actually have a very serious mission.

**İzel Rozental:** A cartoonist carries accumulation, he carries everything, from his culture, within his own borders, of course, he can carry everything within the limits of his own knowledge. I’m trying to express my own feelings with my sketches as much as possible

**Rakel Meşulam:** And you do it very well.

**İzel Rozental:** Thank you, but it is either understand or not. When I first started, the editor-in-chief was Silvyo and he told me to draw anything I like. The page editor was Ivo Molinas — today’s editor-in-chief. They both told me: “Draw whatever you want, just hang around, and we’ll never interfere.” Because I had no interest in the policy, the editorial policy, or the point of view of the Şalom Newspaper. I said I will draw about current events; I will sketch what is going on in the world, you know, I will reconcile the political and editorial aspects, the two examples that I just gave you. It can be social or political, but it may be expressing

an event that is nowhere in the newspaper's headline or in the news. It doesn't matter, I will reflect on my own worldview in my own column. They agreed and asked me to proceed and I'm still continuing to sketch. Under the same conditions? Not at all.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I was going to get there, you acted before me. Please go ahead.

**İzel Rozental:** Whenever you like

**Rakel Meşulam:** Okay fine. I looked at the Ekşi Sözlük a bit. About what has been written about you.

**İzel Rozental:** I guess there's not much stuff.

**Rakel Meşulam:** There is Semih Balcıoğlu's article: "Even the pen gets tired when I try to write about what he has done," he says. You are an illustrator, writer, and translator.

**İzel Rozental:** This is also a covert criticism, a covert cross-line criticism of Semih Balcıoğlu.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Is that so? I did not know him personally, but that didn't seem like criticism to me. I really appreciated it when I read it. Let me ask you this: how do you catch up with all of these in your daily schedule?

**İzel Rozental:** May he rest in peace. Semih Balcıoğlu was a great caricaturist, artist, and even an exemplary person, whom I admire and respect. His line was spectacular. And he was so kind to give my cartoons coverage in his book where he stated around 50 cartoonists renowned in Türkiye from the republic period. The words he uses there have a secret criticism, actually not very secretly either, he does it bluntly. He also wrote similar things for Altan Eebulak. I mean he is blunt if he cares about the cartoons. He aims to improve them. There is something else in that interview, in that article, something very subtle. Who knows what would have happened if our cartoonists were like him? No one noticed this. Actually, a couple of people did. Turgut Çeviker, for example, as a cartoon historian noticed

this and told me. “I know, I saw it,” I said. “I don’t mind”. I won’t mind at all because it reflects a view, an opinion.

**Rakel Meşulam:** In fact, it reflects a social view.

**İzel Rozental:** Now you get me. We would have hoped that the artist would actually have a very different point of view. We would have wished that there was a similar point of view here, even from an illustrator like Semih Balcıoğlu, who, as you said, gained a seat in literature. A person with whom I have been friends, sitting at the same table and drinking raki, looks at me as a stranger. This is very fine-tuning.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Now I understand better the dose of criticism there. Have you actually experienced this? Do you still? How do you react? We will come to those issues. But as you said, let’s go over them one by one. You play bridge at this intense tempo and you draw cartoons about bridge players. Actually, from your drawing about this bridge, I concluded that you were a bridge player. Correct me if I am wrong.

**İzel Rozental:** No, it’s not wrong, I’m a bridge player. But it’s different, my wife was the bridge champion and she won Türkiye’s bridge championship several times in a row. She was a national team player. A very good player and of course she went abroad to competitions, sometimes when it was an interesting country, I was accompanying her. Because bridge championships take 10–15 days just like the Olympics. So I play, but just for pleasure, not long-term matches. I can’t stand that. And I started sketching during these trips. While my carton was published in Şalom, my strips were also published in a magazine called *İş Dünyası* (Business World), which is still published. The French readers liked it, there is this French magazine called Reporters Sans Frontières (<http://www.salom.com.tr/haber-89656-izel-rozentalin-karikaturu-uluslararası-albumde.html>). His editor liked it, and he got the copyrights. While it was being published there, Americans liked it, it went all the way to the US, then to England from there, and as a result, even a book comes out in England. Bridge issues and my cartoons and all, I got bored. I got bored

because it was a very narrow scope, so what can you do? After carrying on for 3–4 years, I said enough is enough, and I quit.

**Rakel Meşulam:** But your spirit of travel continued. You love to travel. You reflect this in your books: Seyir Hali, Moda Sevgilim Yeniden, Kırk Sent Kırk Yazar Kırk Kitap...

(For İzel, living is a trip. He looks at the world through the eyes of a tourist; evaluates events as a traveler. The world, according to this view, is a field of travel. This traveling spirit is close to humor. İzel can experience the joyful, forgiving, and relaxing atmosphere that we easily catch during a trip while sitting in her home...” Ferit Öngören)

(<https://okuyanus.com.tr/urun/dikkat-buda/>)

**İzel Rozental:** Who wrote that?

**Rakel Meşulam:** There is also an article on the rear cover of the book. There are many nice words about you, such as cheerful and forgiving. Your spirit of travel is alive, as far as I understand, you say “that’s something else”. As much as the conditions are met — in these conditions, let’s hope that we all have the opportunity. I think you reflect this spirit in your cartoons too. Does this give you a wider perspective? When you go on a trip, to different places, what you see...Do you reflect this as a hobby or in your profession? Are they intertwined? How?

**İzel Rozental:** I love to travel. Since I love to travel, I do not miss the opportunities. Of course, due to my job, and my profession, there are fairs, in Europe, and the Far East, so I travel frequently. But other than that, I’m a member of Cartooning for Peace. (<http://www.izelrozentel.com/tr/IZEL-KIMDIR?.html>) It’s a French caricature formation...founded by the deceased Kofi Annan and Le Monde cartoonist Plantu. It started after the cartoon crisis in 2005. Do you remember those cartoons about the prophet Muhammad; there was such a crisis all over the world, the place turned into a fire. Until the Charlie Hebdo attack (<http://www.emrecetinblog.com/danimarka-karikatur-krizi-ve-charlie-hebdo-saldirisi/>), a lot of turmoil happened. It was then that Kofi Annan and Plantu made

an attempt and brought together editorial cartoonists from twelve of the world's leading newspapers. A conference was held at the United Nations and this formation was established. Plantu asked me to, so I joined this formation and we made a trip to Japan right away. A Palestinian, an Israeli, a Japanese, and I, wandered around for a couple of days, then we went to Ramallah, East Jerusalem, West Jerusalem, and Bethlehem. There were conferences, a series of exhibitions, and symposiums. Later, this work extended to the Mediterranean, with the theme of "tolerating intolerance" related with the concept of peace. In a system that covers as much intolerance as possible and teaches to be tolerated, even in schools. We have lectured in many schools, we have held conferences, and there were very difficult schools among them. I mean, for example, in Marseille, France, I remember a school where all those second-generation immigrant students were Arab children. I and a Tunisian cartoonist went out there. Teachers were afraid to go to their classes, and we made a presentation for two hours, it was so popular that they asked us to continue in the evening. So, we organized another panel for two hours in the evening.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Can we share a copy of that presentation? Do you have a copy?

**İzel Rozentel:** How are we going to share it, I don't know. I do not have a copy, it's a bit spontaneous, and it's impromptu. You are standing there, showing some slides, I show a lot of slides from what I have drawn or gathered, but every presentation is different! So, these are the most enjoyable things for me to travel. I even will have a trip to New Zealand. Cartooning for Peace has a 3-day symposium in New Zealand. They invite Piyale Madra, they want to see a woman cartoonist, she says she can't go, she says she won't go all that way. There is Ramize Erer. There is this magazine called "Bayan Yanı", she draws in "Leman", she says she can't go that far. Then finally they go to Tan Oral. Tan Oral says that I am too old, I can't speak a foreign language, and how will I communicate? In other words, presentations must be made in English or French. As a last resource, they come to me, I say the last resource because the sponsor of the event is the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs. They come to me and I jump on the occasion. I say ok, my ticket arrives instantly. From there I go to Auckland, or rather New Zealand to another place. (<https://gezimanya.com/avusturalya/yeni-zelandanin-baskenti-sehirleri-ve-bolgeleri>). I flew for 36 hours with a connecting flight, I arrived there, and they picked me up from the airport and took me directly to the opening. Photos were taken, they drove me back to the hotel, then they took me to dinner, etc. How could I forget the name of their biggest city? Anyway, when I opened my eyes, it was noon time the next day. I haven't slept for 36 hours. I can't sleep on the plane, I write, I sketch, and so on. It's not because I'm afraid, I don't like sleeping on a plane.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Just like me, if I am very tired, I may pass out from exhaustion, and fall asleep for 1–2 hours. I interpret it as a feeling of being in control, that is, it is not always, but semi-consciously, most of them subconsciously, we cannot surrender ourselves. For me, I interpret it this way, I don't know if you feel the same way too...

**İzel Rozental:** Anyway, I missed the morning session of the symposium. I was thoroughly embarrassed when I entered the hall. I was announced to all the thousand-odd people saying “He has finally woken up”.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I think that was the cartoonist's humorous point of view, rather than a criticism.

**İzel Rozental:** In short, I stayed there for two and a half days and flew back for another 33 hours. Not everyone does this. It was the answer to the question, “do you like traveling”, you see, I do such crazy things.

**Rakel Meşulam:** In other words, you do this by taking the risk, almost sacrificing your basic needs. I definitely think you reflect this in your work. You really reflect a perspective on the world. At least that's how I see it when I look at it. I want to return to our society. I just mentioned that I had identified some breaking points, albeit very briefly and that I thought there were some changes after those breaking points in Şalom. Before I talk about these changes, you have been

in *Şalom* since 1991, do you think there is a change in the newspaper? In 1991, a brand-new expansion was made and you started. How was the process after that — as much as you observed?

**İzel Rozentel:** Let's not say as much as I have observed, because I never go there, and I do not attend meetings. Sometimes they hold weekly meetings, now the staff has grown a lot. The entire editorial board and all writer colleagues meet once a month or so. I do not like to attend much, I do not like meetings. But in the beginning, supportive conduct toward me when there was this “draw whatever you want” attitude because as far as I understood, the newspaper needed a cartoonist and I fulfilled their need. Silvyo and Ivo's team supported me a lot and at that time and the newspaper became completely independent. I'm not saying economically independent, but editorially, it was a period where no one interfered, no one could put any pressure, and they published whatever they wanted. Of course, there was the editor-in-chief, and there was the responsible editor-in-chief, but they expressed that they could criticize the community as they wished, at least they would not make biased news about the community and they could publish critical articles. Silvyo expressed this openly in some meetings.

**Rakel Meşulam:** We're talking about the '90s right now, right?

**İzel Rozentel:** I consider myself to have become famous in 1991 anyway. I started working in the newspaper and it went like this for a while, it went well. In the meantime, I was criticizing slightly the community in my strips, and the harshest criticism was coming from our community itself. I mean, whenever I made an insulation about the kizbah, or I said a word to the Chief Rabbi, I sketched something about him or about our society...You know, because the “editorial cartoon” includes all of them. I was jabbing at the stupid wedding cards that were being printed, it was about showing off. It's all in the archives. Immediately there was a tremendous reaction, the criticism was not coming directly to me, but to the management. That's also where I got the harshest reactions about Israel. When I draw a critical caricature of Israel or Israeli policies for example. There was Yitzhak Shamir back then. I was very critical of Shamir in '91 and after. I was very critical

of Shamir's policies. They wrote so many harsh comments. The management did not show me some of them, they're hiding them so that I don't get depressed and stop drawing. I will say that this rain of criticism came from Turkish Jews in Israel in general. Whenever I drew Shamir...I couldn't stand it, so I wrote an open letter in the newspaper. ([http://www.salom.com.tr/haber-107370-cambaz\\_ip\\_ustunde.html](http://www.salom.com.tr/haber-107370-cambaz_ip_ustunde.html)) In other words, at that time, there was a bulletin called "Haber" (News) published in Turkish in Israel, and published harsh news both about Silvyo and about me. I couldn't stand it, I made fun of it, and I finally drew Shamir like Superman. If this is what you want, then get a Super-Shamir. As if the man was very handsome. The harassment continued for a while. Until I wrote this letter, after writing this open letter and it was published in the newspaper, criticisms seemed to cease. In the meantime, Shamir left and Rabin came. (<https://eksisozluk.com/yitzhak-rabin--172457>). Then, of course, I changed my style. After all, I have a left-wing view of Israel, I have a different view. In other words, everyone has a different opinion, my opinion is not that particular, it is actually my opinion. Then Silvyo left being editor-in-chief and funny enough the new editor-in-chief of Şalom was the guy who published the "Haber" bulletin. He settled in Türkiye. In an instant, everything changed in the newspaper. All those previous attempts to transform the newspaper into a newspaper with the voice of the Jews in Türkiye (I'm not saying the official voice), but that policy of making the only newspaper with a voice disappeared. Instead, it became like an association bulletin, I cannot even call it a community bulletin, they actually wanted to turn the newspaper into an association bulletin. A period of managing the newspaper with an amateur view and an amateur understanding began with purely amateur efforts. That's when I started coming to meetings. I told them they were wrong, that I could not stand it. My cartoons continued to be published, but the same pressures persevered, and there was still a lot of reaction from Israel. every time Israel did something (the intifada — uprising — had also started), I was sketching cartoons that reflected my view. This time they said, İzel should go and draw these strange cartoons in another medium. In the religious press or I don't know where he wishes to draw, but not in Şalom. We do not need him in here. So I tried to hide my style,

I started drawing fish, and I turned my character into a fish. I got some inspiration from Plantu, his little mouse, because he goes through the same thing in Le Monde. He still struggles. While he was making the mouse talk, I started to make the fish speak. So, for a while, I was so frustrated that I said I will quit. In fact, there is such a period that I completely changed my style, I was not drawing editorial cartoons. I started to draw something totally lame. It was a short period, then I found the fish, and I started to draw over the fish. It is closely related to the editorial director and closely related to the political situation.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Do you think that the takeover of Şalom by the Chief Rabbinate had an influence on this? Şalom is currently under the Chief Rabbinate. You continued drawing there after the takeover, how do evaluate that transition when you look back today?

**İzel Rozental:** The conjuncture today is very different. Today, for one thing, there is external pressure, so I was just saying to my friend below that I was very happy about it, because now my colleagues in the other media, my cartoonist friends, writers, and illustrators also see what it is to be pressurized. Troll attacks, insults, cursing, abusing, tremendous pressure... Taking a very little portion of a cartoon of mine and judging it based on that. They published an article close to a page about a cartoon of mine just a few months ago in the Milli Gazete (national newspaper). They call me a Zionist cartoonist. I am a Zionist on one side and a self-hatred cartoonist on the other side. As soon as I sketch a cartoon of Netanyahu, all hell breaks loose. As far as I understand, Ivo does not reflect it to me, but there is great pressure on Ivo from the Chief Rabbinate. Don't tackle Netanyahu, and don't draw Erdogan, why should I bother to draw Erdogan anyway? It won't be published anyway. But if I cannot draw Netanyahu in a Jewish newspaper, in a newspaper that covers Israel so much on its front page, it's a shame. Then I will make the fish talk again. But I will not give up, working in Şalom motivates me. It is certain that I will not go and draw in another publication. There was a cartoon of Netanyahu that I drew last, it was published. For me, it was an extremely neutral cartoon, I mean, was there any criticism in it? Of course, but it was still published. Ivo

received a tremendous critique. He reflected on this to me. He said, “take a break, don’t draw these guys for a while.” Well, you can’t draw anything about Israel, you can’t draw anything against Israeli policies. You won’t draw AKP anyway. How will I proceed then? In other words, it’s all related to the development of communication technologies. Anyone who gets to the keyboard today can write insulting letters and send them immediately. They used to sit down and write notes, letters, or fax us.

**Rakel Meşulam:** It took some time for that letter to arrive, a time for it to be opened and read.

**İzel Rozentel:** You also had to deal with it, the fax should pass and arrive at its destination... Whereas now it’s very simple, I mean, the internet connection speed used to be a big factor in this. Now the guy writes, and it’s very simple, he kicks it off Twitter. Okay, they are not so many. Five or six comments with words full of insults or curses, and immediately they find supporters. Also, we need to look at this issue in terms of number, how many are we talking about? We immediately panic if there are five criticisms. But remember that there are hundreds of thousands who read your paper. Those who like what you do, do not comment. This is a fact. When I say likes, I don’t mean likes on Facebook. Of course, this happens too...

**Rakel Meşulam:** As you said, both these and the political conjuncture we are in, the AKP government, the fact that the newspaper is under the Chief Rabbinate are all factors... but when we look back to 1992, to the quincennial celebration of the Jewish Community in Türkiye, we can see that the community members feel safe to live here. And at the same period, the newspaper shifts to a perspective on how safe we live. What you just described was somewhat parallel to this. The editorial policy of the newspaper was like this at that time, as far as I can see, until 2003. But with the bombings in 2003, people started thinking that maybe they are not as safe as they thought they were. At that time, I think I caught a change of tone and emphasis in communication between the lines of the newspaper. Then came 2010... How did you experience this period? In other words, it went from we

are safe here, we are happy to be Turkish citizens to “we are a minority here and we have the right to live in safety, especially after the *Mavi Marmara* incident in 2010. Because I saw that there was always anxiety and fear, but there were differences in the process of expressing this. I saw those who stated in 2010 that we had faced uneasiness in 2003. At the beginning of our conversation, you said: “*to tolerate intolerance*”. The issue that was especially emphasized at that time was “we do not expect tolerance, we expect to be equal and to be seen as equal because we are already equal”. We see that the newspaper goes to the point of “we don’t need your tolerance”. Have you experienced these? Did you see what I saw?

**İzel Rozentel:** That determination was correct for that time, it’s a very appropriate observation. Very true, but also very closely related to the administration of the newspaper. The administration style of the newspaper and its perspective are extremely important. This should not be overlooked either. It also has a serious effect on the editorial policy of the newspaper. Also, in terms of texts, the cover page already gives the air of that newspaper. In other words, it shows where it goes and moves according to which wind. For example, I have looked at many social cartoons from 1991 to 2000. Among them, there are those that criticize the community, but according to *Şalom*, there are also many that criticize the wider society. So you can find lots of cartoons about the view of the wider society towards us. Well, on European Day of Jewish Culture (it is held every year, last year it was November 5<sup>th</sup>, and this year it will be in November again) last year they asked me for an exhibition, so I prepared a very small exhibition. I looked at old cartoons in *Neve Şalom* because I always drew them in that period. I have critical cartoons about the way the wider society looks at us. After 2000, I gave more space to the fish, I expressed it with the fish.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I also have an opinion of my own. It shows that you can actually express yourself, which is a very striking finding for me. When I look at your cartoons, I don’t know how well I could have caught what you said. So, what you say is very important to me, thank you very much for sharing. When we look at the examples in other countries, the interview you made with Plantu and *Le*

*Monde* newspaper on your website are all similar. I think if we did the interview today, they would say the same thing. I mean about antisemitism in France (<https://www.dw.com/tr/fransada-antisemitizm-tart%C4%B1%C5%9Fmas%C4%B1/a-18114998>). You mention Le Monde newspaper's point of view on this. So I think it is up-to-date information, that he also encountered the same problems, that he had to make some changes in this style. You even say that his point of view inspired you. Well, apart from France, if we look beyond, are there other examples like this abroad? Plantu, who receives such criticism like you, takes these criticisms and makes some fine-tuning modifications in his own way. You also made some adjustments when appropriate. Do you know anyone who has never done this or does something similar?

**İzel Rozentel:** If he can't do that, he should not draw cartoons then. I can easily classify cartoonists as competition cartoonists, social media, comic magazine cartoonist, and serious newspaper cartoonist. I include Şalom in that category. Şalom made it to the category of serious newspapers. Today, Le Monde, New York Times, maybe I set the bar too high, but Şalom is also following this line. I can include Şalom, that list. It is perhaps the most serious newspaper read in Türkiye, after Cumhuriyet newspaper. So is Agos, it's not bad either. This is due to the conjuncture of the country. Because there are not any other readable, serious newspapers. For example, Avi Katz was recently fired from his job in Israel. Do you know why? Simply because he drew a cartoon. For a topic that was in the parliament or something discriminatory — they removed Arabic from being the official language. They have photos of Netanyahu and his team from after the meeting, in front of the parliament, and they all look very happy. Avi Katz in the *Jerusalem Post* (which is a right-wing newspaper), a newspaper representing conservatives, sketched a caricature of these people, similar to the photo that was taken (<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/bu-karikatur-kovdurdu--dunya-2713692/>). I even explained this cartoon during my program on Açık Radyo and detailed it, you can find it on the website. There is a cartoon of the week section in Açık Gazete, where I talk about a few cartoons every week, and I also talked about it. I mean, there you see this cartoon. It was just a month or two ago and he drew the guys like

pigs. He called it ‘Animal Farm’, a reference to Orwell’s book. So, what does he mean? These are the men we voted for, they came and took over the administration, and now they are happy with what they do. Avi Katz says if Orwell’s book was about geese and not pigs I would draw them as geese, if the dictators were horses or other animals, then I would have drawn them that way. I didn’t draw them to call them pigs, to say these guys are pigs. I just referred to Orwell’s animal farm. This is my view, he says. In other words, these men came to the power, just as Orwell said, with the promises they made, but then they established their own dictatorships and their own regimes. He draws something like this and publishes it. The Jerusalem Post fires him the next day. Also, an 80-year-old cartoonist like him in Germany was fired because he drew something inappropriate. I can’t remember his name now. Things like this happen all over the world. Now the pressure, especially the pressure coming from these trolls, has increased so much. The same thing is true in the US, but the US is in a different position. In the US all TV channels, all media, except FOX, are against Trump. Therefore, they criticize the government freely, or maybe they don’t publish those cartoons if they do not include criticism. They say it’s the country of freedom, everything can be done there, they say everything is permitted, but the rules there are different: no nudity, no violence in comic strips or cartoons.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I mean, there is still censorship, like all over the world, but it stems from different things. The pressure of the trolls, the political conjuncture, the newspaper’s point of view, the editor’s point of view, the internal structure of the newspaper...

**İzel Rozental:** The society’s view. We were talking with a Japanese friend, a famous cartoonist who came to Türkiye recently. He also talks about his troubles. He says he is constantly criticized here. He says he can be criticizing the government, and the EU, but he says, “I can’t criticize disasters, a tsunami or a flood disaster. There is social pressure.” This is sad, you cannot make fun of such events. But this is what humor is for — of course, there will be humor in the cartoon.

Japanese society is not ready for it, they do not want it. That's a problem all around the globe. Let's not talk about China, you know the situation there.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You summarized it very well. Therefore, it happens all over the world for different reasons, but we continue to have our own point of view and express it under convenient conditions when appropriate. You continue to do this as much as you can. Let's talk a little about you: you are of Ashkenazi descent, and you are an Ashkenazi Jew on your father's side. In other words, you have it in your genes. Does this have an effect on your view, on your perspective? Have you ever had such a feeling?

**İzel Rozentel:** I do not think so. Maybe it's because of my upbringing. I don't think it has anything to do with being an Ashkenazi or Sephardic Jew. I grew up in a very secular family and environment. I had Jewish friends, I had Muslim, Armenian, and Greek friends. I discovered the term "Jew" in the military, I mean that I was Jewish. I knew it of course, but I saw the difference back then, only when I got to that age. My parents were from very different cultures. My mother is Sephardic, my father is Ashkenazi, and besides, they separated when I was 13, and they split apart. I was living in two separate houses: one from an Ashkenazi culture, the other from Sephardic culture...Let me be frank, they managed to make me an introverted child. It was very difficult for me to make friends at school, my friendships foundations were quite solid. Was I social? No, I have never been social, I can be considered antisocial. But from time to time, I also took part in debates, I used to like theater, and I went on stage a lot. I mean, I used to do all these things, maybe I did them because I loved to assert myself, but still, I was very introverted.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I mean, it was a very ironic definition in my opinion because irony is everywhere in our lives. How nice of you to describe yourself in this way. Actually, you are doing an extrovert's job and you are very successful at it, so it is necessary to discuss these concepts. Openness - closedness, introversion - extroversion, sociability against unsociability, where does it begin or end? This is the subject of another discussion. You started drawing when you were four years old, first you drew your parents, you drew your elders. Then you drew your friends

in school - you did a lot of research. I also wondered who is this İzel Rozental? I had a lot of fun while reading about you, and the more I read, the more I wanted to read. You actually started criticism at a very early age. You describe your family elders or your teachers so well. They weren't very happy with your drawing, but in the meantime, you continued to sketch. So that's where you got your first reaction, it's nothing new for you. Until the incident at Girgır magazine. You went to Girgır and wanted to sell your first cartoons. You had a file and Oğuz Oral liked two of them very much. He asked you to make some little modifications and to get your money from the accounting department. You had some hesitation at that moment and decided not to change them, you did not get any money and left. When you are describing this event, you say the "anarchist spirit" in me. I mean, you actually started getting reactions a long time ago, but that didn't change your own view. We all read Girgır in those years, and you refused to be featured in a very popular magazine. I mean, leaving the money aside, it was definitely important, but you were at a level to reject even the moral satisfaction of it. This intrigued me. Do you still have a cartoon that you regretted later? Actually, I want to ask this. Something that revealed your anarchist feeling and then you regretted it? Have you ever had a cartoon that you regret when you look back, not because of your family elders, or your teacher's criticism but that you regret yourself?

**İzel Rozental:** Yes, there is more than one. I could say that I was misinformed, I could say that I did not analyze the topic deeply enough, I could say that I did not go into the depth of the subject, it might be because I rushed it. I was even talking to a friend about cartoons that I regretted sketching. I told him that I could almost open a small exhibition of them — kidding. Indeed, it's because you have to wait until the very last minute. Although I am drawing for a weekly newspaper, it has to be a current topic. OK, it shouldn't be too up-to-date, but you're still waiting until the deadline, to see if something new will happen. Something may come up. We are waiting for something to happen until Monday evening.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I will interrupt you very briefly. I asked a teacher why he did not write any books. He said, "I start to write a book, and the next day the

conjunction changes, the agenda changes.” That’s why he said it’s not possible. He is a very valuable professor at Bilgi University, whom I dearly respect. Please continue.

**İzel Rozentel:** This is not a valid excuse. In fact, he expressed it well, let’s say he made up his cover it up well. He found a nice excuse for his laziness but not valid ground. Then nobody would do anything. Anyway, I mean, these things happen because we wait until the last moment. There is this usual laziness in artists. And of course, after not doing enough research at the last moment, or after casting an eye on what is casually written we are misinformed. Or we have some prejudices. To be honest, I have many cartoons of that sort — but don’t think of hundreds. A small exhibition would cover the 15-20 cartoons that I regret and wish I had never drawn.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So, the reason is not doing enough research, prejudice, and being distant from actuality, right?

**İzel Rozentel:** It could also be wrong information. I once sketched a very biased and improper cartoon on the Montenegrin events that I should not have drawn. This is a simple example. Just like I have criticized someone I shouldn’t.

**Rakel Meşulam:** How can you live with this feeling?

**İzel Rozentel:** I’m not denying anything, it’s already in print. What is done is done, what can I do? I stand behind everything I draw, there is always a logical explanation for why I sketched it. They criticized me for a while. I was quite angry then. I say this because I always express my feelings...During the Iraq war, people were protesting the war. Everyone was holding banners, from around 1995-1996. There were those who are against war, the so-called humanists. Meanwhile, a bus was blown up in Israel, 17 people died, and minuscule news appeared about it in the newspapers. So I drew the angel of death with a sign in his hand; “I am against war because terror is better.” I wrote something like it’s more fruitful this way. Our intellectual environment criticized me a lot. Interestingly, this cartoon was also published on the Internet, but with very ugly comments from readers

underneath...They said: “what kind of man is this? He is not against the war but supporting it instead.” I stood behind and defended this cartoon until the end. I defended it this way: “You people are hypocrites. You are looking at things from a single angle. There are events in Iraq; OK, we are against war, but there is terror too. Look, it caused the death of 17 people. If you don’t talk about him at all, if you take make rallies saying I’m against the war, you should be respecting what happens in Israel too. I said this openly. I also said it to the faces of my critics. They said, “Oh İzel, I wish you hadn’t drawn this, it was improper of you.” I do not agree. This one does not fall into the category of cartoons that I regret.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You said the cartoonist always finds a way. Despite the political conjuncture, the criticism, the social point of view, the editor’s point of view, the structure etc. Despite many factors like this, you still managed to put forward your own point of view. Let’s say, both out of respect for your own opinion and out of your anarchist spirit.

**İzel Rozental:** Let’s say that.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I use this expression because you told it, but I use it very fondly. And you actually managed to put it out brilliantly. There is a good example you gave: “For some time, it was forbidden to use these three colors side by side. Because it represents the Kurdish flag. So, I have drawn a rainbow putting these 3 colors aside. The cartoonist always finds a way.” you said. I wish you to continue for many years with ease and joy, always weathering the storm, without hurting your soul.

**İzel Rozental:** Thank you.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I wanted to limit this interview to one hour without tiring you too much. Thank you again for taking this time.

**İzel Rozental:** I thank you.

**INTERVIEW: RAKEL MEŞULAM-İZEL ROZENTAL, July 7, 2020**

**Rakel Meşulam:** We can get started, thank you very much for your patience. Is there a technical distinction? I want to start by asking what kind of technique you use in cartoons.

**İzel Rozentel:** When you say technique, let me tell talk about sketching technique, I mean what is the material used, or the accessory? Indian ink and a grip pen were used in ancient times; you can call it a hatching spike. Dipping my pen into the ink. That's how I draw, just like that. Why do I sketch like that? Because that's how I learned, that's how I saw it done. In other words, I saw this from the masters, Semih Balcıoğlu and Tan Oral. That's how they sketched it, and that's how I do it. However, not all the cartoonists I met later in Europe, that is without exception, do not use this primitive material. In other words, I can say that cartoons normally branch off into three:

1. There are illustrators for the press. They must be fast and prompt. They should catch the wave because they must sketch at the last moment.
2. There are artistic cartoonists. They can even be painters. But they add something to their piece, they add visual weight, they try very hard, and in the end, they make caricatures like a picture. There is still a message inside.
3. I call them bounty hunters; these are the illustrators participating in competitions. At the same time, they paint portraits at fairs and so on.

These three categories are very different from each other. I am a press cartoonist; I belong to the group called “editorial cartoonist”. When you say editorial cartoonist, it's more about politics, social events, current events, and keeping up to date. Yes, I work freely in the newspaper. You see my sketches on the cover page and most of the time you can't find the slightest resemblance with the news on page one.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Regardless of community issues, foreign press featured by the newspaper, or politics, you independently express your point of view.

**İzel Rozentel:** That was my condition anyway, that's why I continue. How many years passed? Since 1991...it has been 28 years. That's the only reason I've

been going on for 28 years. They won't interfere. I sketch in my own way. I keep myself up to date. That platform has given me this opportunity. If I was still sketching in Cumhuriyet or Hürriyet newspapers, I would not be this comfortable. I encountered such demands from time to time. They wouldn't have given me this freedom. Let's come to the technique, as I said, I use a very primitive material as a drawing technique. Let's say I traveled abroad, sometimes you have to draw very fast; you are on the TV or in a panel on the big screen, and it is a little different for cartoonists to participate in the panel. Panelists usually talk or cartoonists draw, which is reflected on the screen at the same time. Of course, that's my problem when I get together with foreign illustrators. They use felt-tip pens. I'm not used to it, but I must use felt-tip pens there, I do, but I lag behind a bit. That's the technical side. I didn't know what to do at first, my first cartoons were already published under the heading of "İzel's" not as "The End of the Tunnel". The cartoon I sketched was published on the front page of Şalom, so sometimes it was a square, sometimes it was rectangular, horizontal, or vertical, in different shapes.

**Rakel Meşulam:** In this case, we cannot say that you stick to a certain pattern.

**İzel Rozentel:** That was the first year or two. Then I disciplined myself. I said that no matter what happens, I will not go beyond this framework. When I want to tell something, I will tell it within that frame. That way, I will make myself accepted by the reader. In other words, that corner will now be a "must" for the reader, they will not encounter anything different from what they are looking for. I said let it be so if there should be continuity, and I tried to fit myself into that rectangular, vertical form. This is a technique, too, and this is a serious technique, that's how I see everything now, that's how filmmakers see it, and that's how I see it too. Wherever I look, I see everything, everyone like this, how I can fit a topic in this frame. Apart from that, a person develops as he sketches. When I compare myself to how I was, I see a lot of differences between my sketches twenty years ago and today. Experts can see it too, but it happens on its own, it doesn't mean that I did it consciously, or that I trained myself or so...When I look back, I have

drawings that were published when I was fifteen or sixteen years old before I started drawing in Şalom. My drawing was very good at that time, and I used to draw a lot, but then there was an interruption. I didn't draw until the 1970s and '90s. I didn't draw anywhere. I have been busier with my work.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Scrikks pens? Right?

**İzel Rozental:** Yes. And my illustration style came to a stop. Later, when I started sketching again in Şalom, my style developed. I don't use any other technique. I'm careful to use colors only when needed. However, when Şalom switched to color printing, I realized that sometimes the newspaper comes out in colorful, multicolored prints and my black and white can get lost. I use color as little as possible. I have a serious problem, I'm colorblind. I have trouble distinguishing colors, and I have to be very careful, sometimes I paint a person's face green thinking I paint it pink, or I paint the sky purple or something. I don't like using colors very much, but if it's going to emphasize something, then I use them. That's all about the technique.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So basically, this vertical square, hardline, thin, soft aesthetic line, such distinctions do not exist in your cartoons.

**İzel Rozental:** It's natural, I go with the flow, by improving myself over time, and this is the case for many cartoonists I talked to. There is this first sketch you draw in a notebook or anywhere and you can't find the same flavor when you copy it in a cartoon that you draw after that. So that's a fact.

**Rakel Meşulam:** This was the topic that I wanted to talk about. You said: "When you look at my colleagues," when you mentioned the first sketches, but when you look at your colleagues, do you have an opinion, comment, or something you want to say about their techniques? Or did you have such a point of view?

**İzel Rozental:** The personality of the person, that is the artist, is reflected in his lines, that is, if there is a line of the essence, it is reflected. Take Turhan Selçuk for instance. A world-renowned illustrator, the deceased has unique straight geometric lines. But when he looked at his first lines, it wasn't like that, he

developed the Steinberg Effect a little bit differently... he both intensified and transformed those geometric lines. When you look at a sketch, I can say “this is Turhan Selçuk”. When I look at another, I can say “This is Semih Balcıoğlu” or I can say “that’s Tan Oral”. Among the younger generation, I can say “this is Cem Dinlenmiş”. I understand it right away... Or I can immediately understand if Erdil Yaşaroğlu drew it. The best compliment I was given came from Turgut Çeviker, the cartoon historian and researcher, who said, “İzel, you have come to such a point that I can recognize your lines as soon as I see them.” He said that 15-20 years ago.

**Rakel Meşulam:** That line has identified with you.

**İzel Rozental:** Yes. That was a very nice compliment. It means that now whatever I draw can be understood from my line, my typography, the shape of the line. Lucky me.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So, what kind of connection is used between the character and the line?

**İzel Rozental:** What do you mean by character?

**Rakel Meşulam:** In other words, the character of the cartoonist; when you say it reflects on his line.

**İzel Rozental:** Perspective.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You gave the example of Turhan Selçuk. When I look at it, you said that’s Turhan Selçuk. It was geometric first and then a more rounded line if I remember correctly...

**İzel Rozental:** I said first round, then geometric.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Then, can it be considered a change in character or not?

**İzel Rozental:** No, when I say the character, I mean the character in the line.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So, you are not talking about your own personal characteristics. Like straighter lines first...

**İzel Rozentel:** Turhan Selçuk apart, the artist can be a quarrelsome guy but this may not reflect in his line, it is not possible to understand it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You are talking about the character of the line.

**İzel Rozentel:** Comic character. Well, that's probably another area of expertise. Maybe he's into graphology, so I won't know about it, but if the man is a nationalist, it will reflect on his line. When I say the line, I mean the illustration of the topic. If he is a racist, his racism is reflected, if he is a Communist, his communism, if he is an Islamist, his Islamism is reflected, of course. It reflects on its subject, when I say its line, it's not its character. As I said, this covers the graphology unit.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Well, we are talking about symbols here, we are also talking about the discourse. For example, some cartoons can have text, while others do not. Are you making a distinction here or as it comes?

**İzel Rozentel:** Of course, this is an issue that I pay a lot of attention to. It gives me headaches. I mean, I don't prefer speech bubbles at all. That's my preference, no lyrics at all. Let the sketch explain itself. But if it does not work, it should be minimal. Even when I write an article, first I write 800-900 words, then I sort it out. How do I get it down to 400? How do I get it down to 500? How useless are some sentences sometimes...I try to sort out all of them, and I can do it, I can do it well. It's the same thing with my cartoons, I mean I write first. Before I sketch a comic strip, I write the text — more precisely speech bubbles. Then I say that this word for instance is unnecessary, I can do without it. I can put a question mark instead. I try to keep it as minimal as possible. Sometimes I don't put add any words, and sometimes there are no lines at all, I just put words, I have cartoons like that. But my preference is a strip without words, putting very few words is my second choice.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Why is that?

**İzel Rozentel:** Because a drawing, a line is the essence of a cartoon, it's visual art. The image should tell its purpose. The reader should put some effort to

get it, I put so much effort into sketching it. They should get the message by looking at it without reading the bubble. I explain a cartoon on the radio, every week. On Açık Radyo channel, Monday mornings. There are around 5-6 cartoons that I have commentated on very easily.

**Rakel Meşulam:** What's is frequency band?

**İzel Rozental:** 94.9! I try to tell cartoons towards ten o'clock on Monday mornings, and the more the cartoons I choose are verbal, the easier I can tell them. Because the tone is easier to transmit when you read the lyrics and pair it with something theatrical. It's harder to describe a caricature without words. I admire wordless strips, especially if they tell a lot, especially if they are right to the point. Those are amazing. When you add a word, it depends on your technique, the technique of literature. I try to use as much metaphor as possible, so that's ironic and does not explain it thoroughly.

**Rakel Meşulam:** How nice, these metaphors are felt very well in your strips. Well, I would like to move on to the Turkish press again. And from there, I want to go to the world press. You gave an example from Plantu in our last interview, when we were talking about the problems that were going on, while we were talking about content. In this context, you said you liked cartoons with no words. Are there any cartoonists you can give us as an example?

**İzel Rozental:** It's not common in this generation. Unfortunately. Are we talking about French caricatures or Turkish?

**Rakel Meşulam:** Both from Türkiye and worldwide if possible.

**İzel Rozental:** In Türkiye, I only come across this in competition cartoons. In the press cartoons, Latif Demirci does this slightly in Hürriyet newspaper. There is no such thing as press caricature in Türkiye anyway, it has decreased so much that it is not possible to come across it. Tan Oral is doing it, but he's been using too many words lately, but he's still doing it. He sketches strips without words and usually inserts an explanation underneath — which is an ironic explanation, of course. Other than that, there isn't much. I can say the same thing for other

countries, especially when we look at humor magazines. There are two humor magazines left in Türkiye: “Uykusuz” and “Leman”, which include solely word-based comic strips. In France, there is Charlie Hebdo. There also words come to the fore, the same thing for Belgian cartoons. Unfortunately, cartoons without text have decreased a lot. However, in the cartoons from the 50s, which we call the 50’s generation, there was this captionless strips tradition that died with Steinberg or Sagel and so. They were telling so much by simply sketching. Tan Oral, Turan Selçuk, Semih Balcıoğlu, there were many more names that I can’t recall now, who were in the 50’s generation. But importance was given to cartoons back then, today it became all about competition cartoons as I said before. It is only possible to come across captionless cartoons in competitions, but then it does not catch up with the current events, so they are subdivided into 4-5 main categories.

1. War and peace
2. Discrimination (racial, religious, etc.)
3. Issues of discrimination against women
4. Nature and environmental issues

I mean these are the basics. They draw on those subjects, but when you look at them, they almost look alike, it looks like a copycat or something, like that.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Why do you think so much emphasis is attributed to words? Especially on press cartoon?

**İzel Rozental:** To explain the topic.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I mean, is it easier to express verbally rather than with sketches?

**İzel Rozental:** Both the lines and the words support the strip. I drew a cartoon this week. I had to talk over the election issue anyway, I mean the results, etc. I could have drawn it completely captionless, and I could have done it, but it would be incomprehensible. Or it could be misunderstood. It could have been pulled in the wrong direction, that’s why I added words. I’m showing a man in two

separate frames. In the first frame, the man jumps in the air, he is happy. I could or could not add a balloon saying “Yay! I won!” It is not a must as he already jumps for joy, obviously, he is happy because he won, because it’s about the elections. In the frame below he broods on: “What will happen now. I won but now what?” I could go captionless. It would have had the same effect, but it could have been misunderstood. I added these words to make it easier for the reader to understand and clearer. I get immediate feedback from some of my followers, they like to comment.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Followers?

**İzel Rozental:** Let’s call them my followers — they praise my work “Wow, it’s amazing,” “It’s beautiful,” “It couldn’t be described better than this,” and so on. I like that, at least I understand that my efforts did not go down the drain.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Absolutely. Getting feedback is so important.

**İzel Rozental:** Yes very, and sometimes criticism too.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Sure, but that’s also kind of feedback, you must like it.

**İzel Rozental:** The negative reaction is also very encouraging.

**Rakel Meşulam:** While people are listening to you, they might think, “How would I answer this question if I were you?” They are always interpreting material that readers are more willing to look at, understand, internalize, or interpret something that is always served to them, but that doesn’t come ready. I have a thought that sometimes they avoid or do not interpret, or because they interpret it very superficially, they go in the wrong direction. That’s why it’s not just you, I understand from what you’ve told me that you are sensitive about this issue. You know, when we look at the broad picture, you said that maybe because of this, people and cartoonists might use more words. You said you see captionless strips, especially in competition cartoons, and you said that it is almost nonexistent in press cartoons, except for 2 or 3 cartoonists in press cartoons. Then, you describe yourself as an editorial cartoonist. When we look at the literature, the words editorial and political are terms that are used synonymously or simultaneously, sometimes

interchangeably. But you say that you are an editorial cartoonist. In your opinion, considering this effort of the literature, is there any difference between the two? Obviously, there is one for you.

**İzel Rozentel:** The main difference is this. I define an editorial cartoon as follows: it appears in a newspaper — which I draw in *Şalom* — in a prominent column of a newspaper, right at the target corner, that is, in the lower right corner of the first page, or sometimes in the lower left corner.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Are they placing it consciously or is it purely depending on the agenda?

**İzel Rozentel:** They do it themselves, it started like that and goes like that. It cannot be related to the agenda because I draw the agenda, but they are far from the agenda, and their agenda is different.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I think that news is based on the way it's covered.

**İzel Rozentel:** Sometimes if it is very related to the news, the cartoon is placed next to the news, the editor places it, but it is usually in the lower right corner.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Because of your editorial description, its place is on the cover page, right?

**İzel Rozentel:** Yes. Just as there is a lead writer in a newspaper, and the lead writer's column has a certain place, so has the editorial cartoon. In a sense, a caricature that deals with the topic that is on the agenda. It could be political, it could be social, it could be anything else. It doesn't have to be political. Political caricature, on the other hand, must be political with certain boundaries. The other has no such range, there is no limit.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I want to talk about minority media. Minority Media, *Şalom*, and the Turkish-Jewish community. When we look at other minority media such as *Paros* publishing, *Agos* newspaper, are there cartoonists like you who have been with the newspaper for so many years? Do you follow them, or are you in contact with them? This is the first question. Since I do not want to interrupt, I will ask the next one after another. When you look at them, we see that you have given

your consent at the beginning of our conversation, as you have given your consent, to the issues that concern humanity stemming from being human, provided that they keep up to date, and that you leave the Turkish-Jewish society issues in the background in order to prioritize them when appropriate. What is the situation in the minority media? For example, are you following this in Agos, what would you like to say?

**İzel Rozental:** Of course, I do. For example, one of the masters of captionless comics works in Agos. Ohannes Şaşkal, is one of the leading cartoonists of Türkiye, which I like very much. He also draws editorial cartoons. He has always drawn in Agos, and he is a poet too and a translator — a multi-talented artist, and his strips are like poems. He does not use words. Almost all his sketches are motionless. He only does photomontage from time to time, but he is a real genius. He has a carton perspective. One of my favorite cartoonists. When we say minority press, of course, we are talking about Jewish, Greek, and Armenian communities...

**Rakel Meşulam:** Not only these, but there are also actually a wide variety of communities.

**İzel Rozental:** Of course not, but when we say minority, these are the ones that come to mind.

**Rakel Meşulam:** We make such a determination by looking at the three monotheistic religions, but in fact, we refer to any community that is less populated than the majority in terms of the word minority.

**İzel Rozental:** We cannot speak of Kurds; we cannot speak of Zazas or Circassians.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Do the Kurds have such publications?

**İzel Rozental:** Of course, they all have. Especially the “Aydınlık”, “Evrensel”. There was “Özgür Gündem”, ah sorry “Özgür Gündem” closed up.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You mean currently?

**İzel Rozental:** The artist had been beaten and battered. What was the name of the cartoonist who drew Qırıx? Dogan Güzel, yes. Doğan Güzel, for example, was drawing a Kurdish character. A Kurdish from Diyarbakır. It's pronounced as "Kriks" and it means something in Kurdish, so I don't know if he's a good man; I don't remember now, but he used to draw for years, I used to follow his sketches a lot, he was doing it as comic strips. Then he was battered. In 2017, the police raided the newspaper and closed it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So that fits my study, then. I want to include them.

**İzel Rozental:** Go online and look for Doğan Güzel, there is a photo of him when the police arrest him and take him away. His shirt is torn, his shoulder is bare, and he has been battered and taken away (<https://www.diken.com.tr/darp-edilerek-gozaltina-alinan-ozgur-gundem-karikaturistini-incesu-ve-latuff-cizdi/>) That picture was over the world, it was published, and at least 30-40 cartoonists drew about him. They drew him like this when Doğan GÜZEL was arrested and beaten while he was leaving. We have not seen this much in Türkiye; they do not talk much about it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I will search on the internet, but if you have another source, in your archive...

**İzel Rozental:** I don't, if you look online for the foreign versions of Wikipedia on Google, it's there.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Before moving to the next question, Doğan Güzel does not prioritize the subjects of minorities under the name of minority in terms of the subjects he draws, or is he just as you do...

**İzel Rozental:** Ohannes, just like me, focuses on world issues and universal issues, so we can call him an editorial cartoonist. But there are two or three additional cartoonists in *Agos*. They only focus on the Armenian issue. They focus on the problems of the Armenian community.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Just like Irwin Mandel in *Şalom* who focuses mainly on community issues.

**İzel Rozental:** he does not do anything else.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Since I haven't made such an intense digital archive about him, I try to choose my words carefully so that I don't say anything wrong.

**İzel Rozental:** Irvin's line, or his comic strips called "Mozotros Family", and "Bizimkiler Family" is exclusively in this concept. He also sketches political cartoons from time to time and shares them on social media.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Just like you have drawn cartoons about the Turkish-Jewish Community over time.

**İzel Rozental:** I'm doing this already, you know, it's in my books. But I fit it into the editorial cartoon frame and publish it on the same page in Şalom. But Irvin cannot find a medium to publish the political cartoon he sketches, because I am there. If one day I go, maybe he will draw political strips there.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Hopefully not very soon.

**İzel Rozental:** That's why from time to time I sketch cartoons on social media. Irvin has a different point of view and has such subtle humor. It is pleasant. He attaches great importance to speech bubbles. He predominantly prefers text.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Yes, there is a lot of writing in his strips.

**İzel Rozental:** Yes, he does, but is pleasant.

**Rakel Meşulam:** What about Doğan Güzel?

**İzel Rozental:** Doğan Güzel is different. As I said Doğan Güzel, who created a character called Qırık is a Kurdish from Diyarbakır. His deal is entirely the Kurdish issue, that is, Doğan Güzel focuses on the Kurds. Therefore, he draws cartoons on other universal topics, namely politics, completely within this framework. He sketches comic strips. Nothing further.

**Rakel Meşulam:** In other words, Ohannes Şaşkal's stance is closer to you, while Doğan Güzel has a closer view to İrvin Mandel, that is...

**İzel Rozental:** Wait a minute, there is a big difference here: Doğan Güzel's lines are purely political. There is political criticism. State criticism.

**Rakel Meşulam:** İrvin Mandel sketches politics that reflect our community, that introduce us, and that satirize our traditions when appropriate.

**İzel Rozental:** There is criticism of the community.

**Rakel Meşulam:** His own community

**İzel Rozental:** He has a temperament that can make fun of his own community, that is, himself, and this is Jewish humor. In other words, the most important feature of the Jews is that they can make fun of themselves. As long as they don't make fun of the oppressive ones. Then they get angry at them and call them antisemites.

**Rakel Meşulam:** That's so true. So, if I were to categorize it: there are cartoonists like Ohannes Şaşkal who are standing where you stand, who give priority to people and human issues. Then there are the cartoonists like Doğan Güzel and/or İrvin Mandel, who give priority to the minorities to which they belong, who sometimes do it by bringing them to a politically critical dimension, who aim to satirize their own community. We can reflect these in two separate categories. Is there a study on this? Is there a publication on minority media that you follow, that you know where the cartoonists are viewed, both in terms of content and technique?

**İzel Rozental:** I've never come across it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Me neither and I know the answer to this question because there isn't one.

**İzel Rozental:** Turgut Çeviker has done extended research. Especially with Ohannes and me. While I send my strip to the newspaper every week, I also send a copy to Turgut because I know that he collects them. I know that he follows them, he has published a 3-volume work on "cartoons throughout the history of the Republic". I don't remember if Turgut Çeviker included me or İrvin in this collection, I'm not sure about it, but he included my cartoons if I remember correctly. There were a few cartoons of mine on social issues rather than political

stuff in minority media published in Şalom. He also included Ohannes's work. He, therefore, included minority media. I do not know any cartoonists in the Greek media.

**Rakel Meşulam:** We know that there are such studies in the mainstream media, that is, we know that there are cartoon studies in the mainstream media. Fatma Müge Göçek, Aydın Akar has studies on this. It has been looked at technically, in terms of content, process, and changes, shaped by power, shaped by the agenda. But there is no such thing for the minority media.

**İzel Rozental:** I have not seen it focusing on minority media or minority press in general.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Me neither

**İzel Rozental:** A lot of studies have been done on my cartoon. Let's not exaggerate when we say lots of, nothing over 10.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Can you share them with me?

**İzel Rozental:** I don't know where to find them. For example, author Tufan Erbarıştıran has written a lot about me. Some wrote a thesis, there were those who made various analyzes. Who knows why I pique their interest?

**Rakel Meşulam:** When I say "who knows" I need to make a comment. First of all, the fact that you draw so consistently for so many years in the same newspaper is a field of study. Is it possible for you to share these references that you mentioned with me? Do you have any of them? Studies that were done on your work. The copies of course, not the originals.

**İzel Rozental:** Have you checked my website?

**Rakel Meşulam:** Of course. In the press section, you have what you have shared share. But there are no studies. No thesis works.

**İzel Rozental:** Tufan Erbarıştıran had such a long study. They don't usually send me their thesis work. They ask me to take a glance, and then I ask them to send it and they forget.

**Rakel Meşulam:** This is quite an ambivalent situation. I thought about this a lot, you know, what and how much I should share with you. Of course, you have a stance and a point of view, but should you or shouldn't you be contacted by the researcher for an independent and impartial point of view?

**İzel Rozental:** OK, but why don't they send it after the thesis is complete?

**Rakel Meşulam:** There is a critical view, after all, and it may be that you did not express yourself sufficiently. So, it's a two-sided street. Maybe we're afraid that we might say something wrong. Maybe if you didn't express it sufficiently, this request may be due to you as well. Anyway, I will share it with you. But in the meantime, if there are some things you have to share, I'd be very happy if you could share them with me.

**İzel Rozental:** I'll take a look, I mean there are so many things, so many documents, information, and stuff.

**Rakel Meşulam:** If you start somewhere, the rest will come in rapid succession. This is a very important archive for you. You have already collected most of them on your website. These are your books.

**İzel Rozental:** I used to add it regularly, but I've been neglecting it for a while.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Yes, but it's actually a very extensive website. In fact, I discovered many different aspects of you that I did not know at all, looking at your site.

**İzel Rozental:** Since it has become so extensive, I do not want to shut it down or transform it into a blog.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Why did you think of shutting it?

**İzel Rozental:** It is costly. The number of visitors is low. There aren't many sales. Now blogs are much more dynamic and much more active. This is a static site, it's outdated. Someone will visit it wondering who I am or before inviting me somewhere, then they go to the website to look at it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** For instance, I didn't even know you had a website, I found out after you said it. So naturally, I need to write a resume about you. I wonder if I can use this resume, the one on your site? I am asking this because you told me that you haven't updated it in a while. I mean, should I take it like it is or would you like to update it and share it with me?

**İzel Rozental:** It has been updated at least in 2018, if not 2019. Or you can it to me and I'll check it out.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Then I will take it as it is.

**İzel Rozental:** I can review it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** It may sound like homework but...I don't know how to put this politely...if you can find the research that has been done about you.

**İzel Rozental:** I'll look at it but I'm not making any promises, it's really hard...

**Rakel Meşulam:** If it's hard, then...

**İzel Rozental:** When I say hard, it sounds grueling to me. Computers are updated over time.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You start thinking, where did I save it, who knows where this file is? Right?

**İzel Rozental:** It is definitely in one of them, I have 5 or 6 hard discs, all neglected. I have to look at them too. I have issues naming them. I cannot name all the files "İzel", it is not possible to name them "resume", and "research" is not good either. I need to remember the names of the people who did them. If I name it Rakel Meşulam now, I know I can find it easily... I have talked to a lot of foreigners in the same way, some sent them to me and some did not. People from abroad, from Belgium, from the USA. The last interview was with a British guy. I will have a look.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I would be very happy if you could take a look. Also, to copy them – rather than copying, maybe it's something we would never be able to

encounter since it was never published. In other words, it may be information that we cannot find on internet sites. That's why it's important if it comes from you. Well, thank you very much, it was great as always to see you again...

**İzel Rozental:** Thank you.

**INTERVIEW WITH İVO MOLINAS&İZEL ROZENTAL, May 17, 2021**

**Rakel Meşulam:** One of the reasons we are here today is to understand and explain how you have worked together for years.

**İzel Rozental:** If you had asked me, I would have told you on the phone, staying away from each other...

**Rakel Meşulam:** That's a great answer for the very beginning of the interview. As you know, my thesis is on communication. I am writing a doctoral thesis at Bilgi University. Since 2015, we have been examining how the Turkish-Jewish Community has been communicating through Şalom Newspaper. At this point, we examined the Şalom Newspaper in many different areas: local news, foreign news, non-Jewish writers from the wider society... "The End of the Tunnel" is a comic strip drawn by dear İzel Rozental since 1991. We focused our thesis on this category, and we tried to understand and explain what the Şalom Newspaper is telling us on behalf of the Turkish-Jewish Community, on behalf of communication, through cartoons. That's the point, in a nutshell. Earlier, we talked to İzel about his work program, both in terms of content and technique. And İvo, we talked with you about the start, what the editorial policy of Şalom is, and how Şalom is seen by the readers. But we're here today for another purpose: as I just said, how have you been working together? Are you always in consensus or are there conflicts of opinion? How do you handle these? First of all, I want to ask about these. We will try to go into details in line with what you share.

**İvo Molinas:** Without further ado, the current line of the Şalom is above the community to absorb and reflect universal ideas. Şalom is a newspaper that can think differently politically, religiously, and culturally in every sense, such as the

profile of the community, the way the community perceives the world, and multi-dimensional thinking. İzel, on the other hand, is one knot above Şalom in that sense, in terms of our universal worldview and its relations with the outside world. İzel's caricature profile is very different from the general profile of the community in terms of content. After a while, criticism began to come. At this point, even if we did not have a conflict with İzel, we had a difference of opinion. but of course, these were exchanges of ideas that could stay between us. Then a very good factor came into play.

**İzel Rozentel:** A moderator, he means my wife.

**İvo Molinas:** She saved my life. He was also relieved. Do you know why? For example, İrvin, not İzel, draws a cartoon about Tayyip Erdoğan on his Facebook account that can cause serious problems and posts it on his Facebook account. Where will the next man flee to? Armenia or Kazakhstan? They start thinking about where to escape to be safe.

**İzel Rozentel:** It seems like that cartoon will not be featured in any newspaper or media organization in Türkiye today. And Oda TV caught it instantly and launched it as follows: "Here is the most controversial caricature of İrvin, the cartoonist of Şalom, the newspaper of the Turkish-Jewish Community". What was that? An article, idea, picture, image, or cartoon shared by a guy from his private account. Should this be attributed to the Jewish Community? Should it be binding Şalom? Or accredited to the Jewish Community? İshak İbrahimzadeh called me right away, saying what nonsense is this? How do I know what this guy did on his personal account? I immediately called İrvin and said: "Look, this is really a big issue. They will lynch the newspaper and the community immediately. Of course, what happens to the newspaper will happen to me, but it will also harm the community. Therefore, everything a Jewish person does is immediately attributed to the congregation. There is a perception like this: "Jews are all the same, they all think the same. They act cruel to the Palestinians, they oppress them."

**Rakel Meşulam:** In every sense, materially and morally.

**İvo Molinas:** İzel helped us a lot because he knows this very well. We never hindered what would be above the profile of our Jewish Community's general opinion on universal issues. Because I've already agreed to most of his opinion profile. We did not have much conflict lately, did we, İzel? But it was different before. He gets smoother over time, and now he self-censors as well.

**İzel Rozental:** No, I'm not self-censoring. This is not self-censorship.

**İvo Molinas:** I mean, don't you ever think, "let's not sketch this, it's not the appropriate time?"

**İzel Rozental:** I'm drawing everything I wish to draw. Does it get published or not? That is another issue...Let me be frank; sometimes it is published, sometimes not.

**İvo Molinas:** So, you think that it may not get published, but you send it to us anyway.

**İzel Rozental:** I do not practice self-censorship. I see it as the most dangerous thing right now. I'm not just saying this in terms of cartoons.

**İvo Molinas:** I do it

**İzel Rozental:** This is very bad.

**İvo Molinas:** But everybody is doing it.

**İzel Rozental:** Unfortunately, this is the common understanding at the moment. This means the end of the press, of the newspaper, and not only in Türkiye but also in the world press. And what happens in the end? When self-censorship is in place? Because these ideas have to somehow spill over. This time, social networks are used, and there is an explosion there. And the theories, writings, and nonsense of some incompetent people are circulating from hand to hand, because of self-censorship. This is also very true in the US. Someone recently asked me to write an article. Art Spiegelman, the illustrator of Maus. Not DC Comics but the other one, Marvel. You know Marvel, it took over Disney and it's going to release an album of the 1920s and '40s. They asked Art Spiegelman to write the foreword.

He wrote it. At one point, he used a red skull to illustrate Captain America's worst enemy. It was red then; it continues today with an orange skull-like shape. Of course, he's referring to Trump. They did not publish it. He retracted his post. The Guardian published that foreword last week. A very interesting article indeed... Over the years (I am in the press for almost thirty years), I have worked with three editorial directors, but I have always worked with İvo. First, he was the foreign news officer, and the editor. I was working in foreign news. Silvyo was the editor-in-chief back then. Thanks to them, I started sketching cartoons again. Political cartoons. They came up with a proposal, the Gulf War just started, and they said we want to publish comic strips in Şalom, so I started. I've never interfered in internal affairs. I saw that Şalom has nothing to do with local politics. However, the prime minister has changed, there has been an election, and this is exactly how it started...

**Rakel Meşulam:** You focused on universal issues on the way to inform and follow the agenda.

**İzel Rozentel:** It is not news, the newspaper had an agenda, but there was absolutely no domestic politics. There was Israeli politics, a bit of world politics of the way, it was taken care of. But of course, it is a Judaist publication. I'm not very interested in Judaism. I lie low. Let's just say it's my fault. But to be honest, I enjoyed seeing my cartoon on the cover page. Then I started to draw Saddam strips one after another. After that, they tried to pull it up a knot, as İvo said. I drew a few caricatures of the community. They were not happy. They called meetings.

**İvo Molinas:** FKD members warned us about news in the newspaper. I've done this a few times in a slightly different, slightly more thorny way than Irvin did, about bar-mitzvahs, about Jewish life.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I will intervene here, as someone who has experienced this... Can we say that you started focusing on universal issues instead of changing your style or censoring, according to the criticisms coming from the community, both from within the newspaper and from the community?

**İzel Rozental:** One hundred percent. I had the upper hand in this, it opened various doors. Today I am less known here than I am known abroad.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Did your focus on these issues make you known abroad?

**İvo Molinas:** He participated in a few competitions, did not you?

**İzel Rozental:** I did not participate in exhibitions or competitions, but I became a member of a number of organizations. I met foreign cartoonists. I invited them to Türkiye.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You have mentioned Cartooning for Peace.

**İzel Rozental:** Yes, I am a member of France Cartoons.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You were also close friends with the illustrator of Le Monde.

**İvo Molinas:** Plantu, right?

**İzel Rozental:** Yes, my caricatures were published twice in Le Monde.

**İvo Molinas:** I did not know that.

**İzel Rozental:** Selçuk Demirel called me and asked me how my cartoon was published there.

**İvo Molinas:** What was it about?

**İzel Rozental:** It was about '68, he is the 68 generation. In the 50<sup>th</sup> year, I wrote the Viagra article, there was smoke coming out of it, it was something like that. There was also an issue between Israel and Türkiye back then, all of which were cartoons published in Şalom. I'm going to Saint Juste in October for a conference. I have a conference in Paris. We will represent Türkiye as a group of two. Semih Bora and I are invited. Semih Bora does not speak French, he can barely speak English, so I will translate. Then again in Strasbourg.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You also wrote as a traveler. You have books written on this subject as well.

**İzel Rozental:** Frankly, I owe it to Şalom. As İvo explained very well, I am one knot above the newspaper and they try to pull me down. At the same time, they try to pull Şalom down too. I'm trying to pull it up.

**İvo Molinas:** There is a struggle.

**İzel Rozental:** I emphasized it in all interviews. Şalom got to the point where it literally became serious a newspaper. I said this in our last meeting. Şalom has different periods for me, there are three phases: First; with İvo. At that time, he was the foreign news director. We had close communication. Whenever I was in trouble, he would step in and relieve me of my problems.

**Rakel Meşulam:** What kind of troubles are we talking about?

**İzel Rozental:** For example, they would call him at two in the night asking: "What does this cartoon mean?" I'm also a little stubborn, I would insist: "it will be published!" Or I wanted to open an exhibition in the old building of Şalom, it was an issue. Because I wanted to open it on Saturday, of course, these are not about the newspaper. Then the editor-in-chief changed, I guess I told you about that. The newspaper has ceased to be a newspaper for me. In other words, I fought a great battle, I especially emphasized the name of Şalom in all the interviews I gave abroad. Do you know how many times the name Şalom was mentioned in France? They make a TV program on Fridays and show cartoons from the world press. Four or five journalists are there to discuss current issues. They show cartoons on the subject they discuss, and they have to indicate where those cartoons were published when they were published etc. The name Şalom has been mentioned at least fifteen times in these shows. I draw universal cartoons; I can say that.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I wanted to talk about that too.

**İzel Rozental:** Today, there are only a handful of cartoonists left in Türkiye who draw in the press, I can count them all one by one. There are two artists among them. There is one brave cartoonist. One who draws for the newspaper Evrensel, whose name I can't remember right now, and Ercan Akyol. His drawing comes out three days a week in Melih Aşık's column, but of course, it's a tiny sketch, the guy

has a great line and is an opponent. He draws five sketches, but only two are published. Three of them are censored in Milliyet.

**İvo Molinas:** It's interesting that they still keep him.

**İzel Rozental:** He publishes online.

**İvo Molinas:** On his private account.

**İzel Rozental:** Of course. There are two now, there are no more left. Are there any cartoonists in Hürriyet? No. There are some in the Cumhuriyet, but most of them were fired. Penguen Magazine was also closed. Now there is only Uykusuz and Leman. There are political cartoons only on their first and second pages. They all focus on local events; this has been the case for years. There was the late Ali Ulvi, who could look a little more outward because he could speak a foreign language. Apart from that, there are no foreign-oriented cartoonists in Türkiye, Şalom gave me this opportunity.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Şalom not only opened a door for you to introduce yourself on international platforms but also the newspaper found the opportunity to be introduced abroad (thanks to you). So it was kind of a win-win formula. Based on this, you continued to work and draw on universal subjects.

**İvo Molinas:** For example, Trump is a friend of Israel, his daughter is Jewish, and his son-in-law is Jewish. But İzel puts such a criticism of Trump on his caricatures...I don't see any problem with this. I'm not telling İzel everything, people's feedback. "How can İzel criticize so badly a president who does so much good to the Jews?" "What kind of Jewish newspaper are you?" I receive such reactions. I'm not saying this to him. So, I'm defying them. I don't reflect it to him at all, but whenever he doesn't do it anymore, whenever he starts inclining toward local politics, or if he is going to criticize Tayyip... When Davutoğlu was the prime minister, planes and bombs were falling on Southeast Anatolia in those days. We were going to write about it, and we were going to publish it, but we decided not to at the last minute, I think it was a good idea.

**İzel Rozentel:** I have a conference presentation, and I presented it at Şalom. It is a forty-minute presentation of cartoons that were removed, unpublished, and garnered backlash. I will show it in Germany now, a Jewish organization invited me to Lumberg.

**İvo Molinas:** Let me see these unpublished cartoons, dear İzel. I want to see them too. Come here on a Saturday and make this presentation at the meeting. It's just for visuals, right?

**İzel Rozentel:** There is a bomb cartoon that Şalom did not publish, not about Türkiye, but about Syria.

**İvo Molinas:** It was on the borders of Türkiye, in Southeastern Anatolia.

**İzel Rozentel:** Right yes, Davutoğlu was sending the pigeons first, then...

**İvo Molinas:** Then he was bombing his country.

**İzel Rozentel:** I drew a cartoon. They liked it and it was published. As soon as Davutoğlu came to power, he said we have zero problems, no problems with our neighbors or borders; he was sending pigeons all over the place, but he was sending a falcon to Israel only. I drew that; the cartoon was published, and there was no problem, no hassle. Then the guy turned toward the Southeast, dropped a real bomb, then Suruç happened... You know.

**İvo Molinas:** In other words, he throws bombs so that a civil war breaks out. If I would publish this, I will be charged with treason. Fortunately, we reached İzel's wife that night; they were leaving a concert, and it was time for sahur. The newspaper would be published, I called İzel, but he did not answer, they were at a concert. After all, his wife became my lifeguard. I want to say one more thing and I will not speak of it again.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Come on, we just started.

**İvo Molinas:** To compare the profile of the community, the Ashkenazi Synagogue had asked him to bring a speaker. He asked Ömer Madra, but the guy did not give a good speech, he talked more about environmentalism.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Was it about the climate, what was it? I was there too. You are right, it was not an appropriate speech, because we expected him to mention different topics in front of this crowd.

**İvo Molinas:** Yes, but at one point he also said that he was a resister in Jewish uprisings.

**Rakel Meşulam:** They thought he was making Palestinian propaganda there, too...

**İvo Molinas:** He did not make any other propaganda.

**Rakel Meşulam:** This happened because he was not sensitive to the problems of the community.

**İvo Molinas:** Someone asked İzel: “who found this guy?” İzel says, “I did.” They say: “I hope you did not look for him a lot.”

**İzel Rozental:** Then Ömer received two gruesome emails. One from İshak İbrahimzadeh, one from someone else. “I will answer them,” Ömer told me. “Don’t,” I said. One of them is the head of the community, write him a short answer if you want, but do not answer the other. Because if you reply, he will see it as a source of pride, and ugly things will follow.

**İvo Molinas:** The other guy wasn’t even here; it was something that didn’t concern him at all. He moved to Israel, and he sits back and watches the events closely. This happened in the Ashkenazi Synagogue, so there is a problem between us now. The guy wanted to make a program, to create the opportunity to use the problem that happened years ago; we did not accept it. However, he made a show on *Açık Radyo*, then he wanted to do another show. I said it has nothing to do with him. I told him to reply to him, and he did not. He did not give any replies, to either of them. He chuckled and told me: “I delivered my message,” covering it up under the climate issue. It’s an obsession beyond anomaly for me. Like the girl who set sail to America in a sailboat.

**İzel Rozental:** Exactly...Obsession, but he is right...

**İvo Molinas:** Of course, he's, maybe he should exaggerate to wake people up.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Speaking of which, was there a reason you chose Ömer Madra? So, when you invited him as a speaker that day, did you have any expectations?

**İzel Rozental:** I have been working with Ömer for two years. On Monday mornings, I describe cartoons of the week on his radio. There was an exhibition project going on at the Ashkenazi synagogue: the living history exhibition of the Ashkenazi culture, which is now open. So I went with the management to ask for money and support. It was already on their agenda. They wanted to invite a speaker "but we no longer want a professor, a historian; get us someone with a different perspective," they said. I proposed: "Would you like Ömer Madra?" Moşe Grossman liked the idea: "that would be great," he said. "The man is leftist, but it's a good choice, he has different views, different perspectives," he said. I said OK. I then asked Ömer who said: "I'll be happy to talk." I understand now that I should have given him limited time, he spoke too long.

There is the video too: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz-ro645QGk>

I mean, Ömer was the subject there, but after that, we talked a lot with him. I said, "There were some mistakes there." Ömer Madra is an anarchist. Wherever he is invited, he aims to open this issue, to wake up to this topic, to shake people. He came there that day to agitate the crowd.

**Rakel Meşulam:** How did he tie the subject to the ghettos?

**İzel Rozental:** He had already included the subject of ghettos in the conversation and connected it with death. People being killed, executed... Then someone sent me a revulsion message right away: "Why is this guy confusing climate issues and the deaths in the ghetto?" There were quite a few reactions, those were coming directly to me.

**Rakel Meşulam:** There were also very serious reactions in the area where I was sitting.

**İzel Rozentel:** Okay, that was the man's goal anyway. Was my good intention abused? It was, but my only fault was not telling him for how long we wanted him to speak. I knew he was going to speak impromptu, there was no lecture he had prepared. So I thought, he would adjust. I began to wink at him, I was sitting in the second row, right behind İbrahimzadeh. I point to the guy and tell him to finish. İbrahimzadeh turns to me in heat and says: "How long will this man talk, how many more insults is he planning to toss?" And I was in a bad state. Shall I answer İbrahimzadeh or silence the guy? Whom did he insult? There was nothing I could call an insult.

**İvo Molinas:** According to them, even the slightest criticism of Israel is insulting. Even worse, if it's in a Jewish newspaper or in a synagogue. That's why when I made criticisms of Israel (I would have done it very seriously ten years ago), they wanted to ban me from entering Tel Aviv. I could enter the airport but not Bat Yam or Tel Aviv.

**İzel Rozentel:** He says something very important. The harshest reaction comes from Bat Yam.

**İvo Molinas:** Now Bat Yam is over...Whenever I criticize Netanyahu a little in my tweets (on my personal tweet account), I come across things like: "You, are the editor-in-chief of the only newspaper that represents the community, you should not criticize Israel even in your private tweets. Are you a self-hating Jew?" That's what they say. Those who do these have mostly radical views, but if I don't defend myself, because if I do these views will find more supporters.

**İzel Rozentel:** These are not just radicals. Those who made aliyah in the first place, who still speak Turkish, who cannot break themselves off Türkiye, and who still regret it here. According to them, İvo has no right to criticize Israel, just like anyone who writes or draws in Şalom. Come here and criticize from here, they say. Make aliyah, join us, and then you can criticize as much as you want. Will you criticize the government? But here is what they claim: "you can't do that as a Diaspora Jew in Türkiye." So, I sketched something like this: A little boy asks his grandfather: "What is Aliyah? Who is he?" The elder's answer: "Turkish Jews

living in the US, France, Spain, and Israel”. This cartoon was published in Şalom. I drew a caricature of that sinister Lieberman. Do you know how much reaction I got? The whole world draws it. I used to draw Shamir; they would insult me...I was drawing Shamir ugly; they were criticizing me. If we make a show about it, you will laugh a lot there.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I would love to watch that.

**İvo Molinas:** I will invite you.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Therefore, we humbly saw that you focused on some issues. I’ve sorted them into several categories. For example, you draw about democracy. Now, I go back to my previous question. When we say democracy, it is claimed that the definition of democracy has different meanings and different purposes according to different researchers. I’m curious about your opinion on the categories İzel sketches. For instance, what do you think about democracy? While some say that democracy is beneficial for societies, another group of researchers argues that trying to establish democracy, especially in societies with low socio-economic culture, leads to the emergence of more authoritarian ideas. I want to ask in turn: according to you, is democracy necessary for societies or not? Or what kind of interactions does it evoke in what kind of societies? I’m curious about your personal opinions. We just talked about some issues in the community. You had to take some actions from time to time due to the claims, pressures, and reactions from both the community and the wider society. Do you have a difference of opinion on universal issues? We’ll try to see what you’re doing.

**İzel Rozentel:** I don’t think there is any difference of opinion on that. I will talk very shortly, then İvo will tell you the longer version, I’m sure. Let me first say that I am not an intellectual or an egghead, I feed off what I read in the press or in various books. I understood very well what you said. In other words, it is a matter of debate in which direction democracy is in developing or underdeveloped societies, and how different it is from democracy in developed societies. I don’t have a strong head for these. I don’t have that level of intellectual background. I superficially think that democracy is an indispensable element for humanity, and

for the concept of democracy in my head (as I said, its borders are very strict, very certain) I draw cartoons in accordance with the democracy picture in my head without going into that depth. I believe İvo will be better at explaining the philosophical side of it than I can.

**İvo Molinas:** I think, rather than democracy, freedom of expression is the only thing that makes people human and makes it possible to live happily in society. The freedom to express what one wants without living under pressure. This only exists in democracies. Therefore, rather than “whether democracy fits or not” to an underdeveloped society, I wish to secure freedom of expression in underdeveloped societies. Because for me, closedness, communitarianism etc. prevents branching out. And in closed societies, there are crowds who think that the only truth is what they have learned. However, when they open up a little, they see that there are different opinions and then they start questioning. But those who do not want to question continue to stay in their closed environment. This conservatism also exists among Jewish communities. They don’t want to question. Those who do not want to question too much are actually people who are not sure about their own profiles. That’s why they say “I shouldn’t question it.” That’s what democracy does. It gives freedom of expression to everyone... Whether in the United States or in Türkiye, people in coastal cities become more progressivist, but as you go inland, people become more conservative. Because in coastal cities, people who interact with each other, expand their vision by exchanging goods, ideas, etc. If you need to renew yourself, even if it is not 180°, you need to upgrade and your ideas become a bit more universal. That’s why democracy is a very important thing for freedom of expression. There is a writer called Metin SARFATİ who writes in Şalom. A professional, maybe you’ve seen him.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I do not know him, but I read him.

**İvo Molinas:** You need to know him. An out-of-line person. Even more than İzel...For example, in one of his articles, he compares Moses and Abraham, saying that Abraham was actually a real humanitarian leader, that Moses politicized the concept, and that after that Judaism turned into a more common religion. He

explains the subject in more philosophical terms. It is a very nice, theological discussion, a clash...Apart from that, he brought serious criticism to Israel's policies and therefore received very serious criticism from the Turks living in Israel. Some people decided to write a letter to the Chief Rabbinate claiming that Şalom Newspaper was insulting their religion with the jargon of the Turkish religious people here. They wrote: "We ask that the necessary action be taken to dismiss this writer who insulted our holy beliefs in Şalom." Did you know that?

**İzel Rozentel:** No, I didn't know, I knew they were lynching but I didn't know that.

**İvo Molinas:** I fought for him. I said that this writer neither spoke badly about the Jews nor uttered a single word about Israeli constitutionalism. He just thinks a little differently from the perception of Israel, which is our richness, it exists all over the world. Our richness, versatility, freedom of expression... They should listen to him a little, maybe they will find some of his ideas right, and even if not, they will have another perspective on the issue. They can say, "I don't agree with you," but you can prohibit them from writing what he thinks. Someone wrote a petition to expel me from the congregation, Mr. Eskenazi fifteen years ago. You know the guy.

**İzel Rozentel:** But we also dismiss people sometimes. For example, Roni.

**İvo Molinas:** But Roni is a little unconventional. I'm not joining you here. Roni is a bit of a self-hater, a Jew-hater, but slowly he started to change...

**Rakel Meşulam:** Yes, slowly but surely. We are aware of this.

**İzel Rozentel:** No. He doesn't hate Judaism, look at his books, and poetry books, he is at peace with his own Judaism. He does not accept Israel, the problem is there, the guy is a communist. But a Jew should have a red line to discussing Israel's legitimacy.

I will present this too. When shall I come for this presentation? Do you want Israel destroyed? You don't want that, but Roni does. Here we go, this is where we differ. We are not that much alike...How was Spinoza excommunicated? And why?

**İvo Molinas:** Okay right, yes it was, that's how they wanted to do Metin as well. "Spinoza is a Zionist guy, a Spinozist guy, he writes about Spinoza all the time. You should consider discarding this man from the newspaper." Fortunately, people here did not take this statement seriously because they trusted me, especially our ex-editor-in-chief Yakup Barokas and his wife, then Robert Schild, and all those Turks who moved to Israel; They wanted this man to be kicked out of the newspaper for what he wrote. Anyway, I struggled, maybe someone else wouldn't have. I backed him. I tell you this to show you the profile of the Jewish community, the profiles of those who read Şalom.

**Rakel Meşulam:** And how much you stand behind freedom of expression and claim it...

**İvo Molinas:** Yes, I see democracy in that sense. Otherwise, democracy has many mistakes and issues. There are systems that only perform ballot box democracy, which they refer to as democracy. Türkiye is one of them. Democracy is a system in which it is right, justice, crosschecks, and mechanisms that control each other, but we have only ballot box democracy here. Where there is freedom of speech, democracy is best. Being close is always a bad thing, it can't take you anywhere. It hinders relationships and it hinders development.

**İzel Rozentel:** As they are connected, they are also slightly different from each other... Let's consider a company. Unfortunately, some states are now run by corporations. They are run like a company. You have a meeting with the chairman of the board or with the CEO, he gets everyone's opinion, but actually he has already made his decision. He will already implement it. Is this democracy? It's not, is it? This is what is being done right now...Even in developed countries, I mean Trump is an example.

**İvo Molinas:** It's the same in England now.

**İzel Rozentel:** Yes, England is at the same situation, and what frightens me is the world's situation when we go back ninety years...Great depressions, here is

the state of Europe. There are immigrants. After all, the situation is not getting better.

**Ívo Molinas:** Yes, what else have you got?

**Rakel Meşulam:** I will add a small note at this point. This is not an intellectual talk, it's just what you or Ívo think in the categories you are sketching...So just sharing your opinion will be enough. Since I did some reading before, I came, I just wanted to give some examples from them. Economics is another category for instance...Different researchers have defined the economy in different ways. According to a group of researchers, the main task of economists is to describe the economy, to describe the current situation. According to another group, it's structuring and manipulating the economy. According to you (and you draw a lot on this topic) What is the duty of an economist? What is the situation in Türkiye? Again, I'm just asking because I'm curious about what you think.

**Ívo Molinas:** The duty of an economist should be the ability to analyze and read the future according to scientific methods, not beliefs. Among other manipulations that are being done in Türkiye, even accurate information is not provided by the state in the field of the economy anymore. An economist must have the ability, to tell the truth, based on science. Otherwise, you become the economist of the state, you become the economist of the government.

**Rakel Meşulam:** What do you think is the situation in Türkiye?

**Ízel Rozental:** Just like this.

**Rakel Meşulam:** State economist, far from scientific methods...

**Ívo Molinas:** Whomever we see in the press is usually guided by them. In fact, it is obvious that inflation figures have always been manipulated and some changes have been made in that formula, however, there are universal standards for this. How can you trust a system that does its best to keep inflation low by playing with numbers? It is not enough to reverse the correlation between interest and inflation, the known economic theories, and claim that it is because of this, not because of other factors. But the head of state says so. What should an economist

do in a country ruled by a person who says the opposite of the first basic rule, with an economy managed like this?

**Rakel Meşulam:** How do you evaluate this?

**İzel Rozentel:** I can't evaluate, I'm a businessman. I ran a company for forty-five years.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Srikss pens, right?

**İzel Rozentel:** Yes, I'm retired now, I quit. I transferred my shares. I handed them over to my partner. I act as a consultant, I go occasionally, and there are agreements to make. Whatever I live, what I feel, if I need to criticize, I will criticize. If I need to applaud, I will applaud. But unfortunately, there was nothing to applaud until now...

**Rakel Meşulam:** What did you criticize?

**İzel Rozentel:** The course of events. Political, and economic, these two are very much connected. The course of the economy has always been the same, always the same vicious circle... I even drew such a cartoon once. A man and a woman are watching TV, the woman says that "the US dollar has peaked", which often peaks anyway. "Are they repeating the news?" asks her husband. So, we live this all the time. It peaks, then, it will peak again in two weeks. Do you want to bet? It will peak again in November. When Kemal Derviş came, I drew him a lot back then. Derviş, the triple coalition, nothing got better, then zeros were thrown out of the Turkish Lira. I sketched him, but I'm mostly drawing what happened. I cannot predict what will happen. Economists should predict this, as İvo said. Economists should predict, and economic writers should write some things, but there are no such people. I mean the football game is over, then commentators sit together and they comment after the game. If this was so and so, then the result would be so and so, if this player would have scored, this would have been the case, etc. It's very easy to comment afterward, and that's what I do, drawing and criticizing what's going on. I wish lessons were learned from this. I've been drawing for twenty-eight

years. I started at the beginning of 1991, so twenty-eight years are over. I published seven or eight books. Let them look at my cartoons and learn a lesson for the future.

**Rakel Meşulam:** You say that we have a repetitive economy, the duty of economists here is not just to tell what is happening, but to evaluate it with scientific methods, as İvo has just said.

**İzel Rozental:** Absolutely.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Another category is “living standards”. You draw on people’s lifestyles, habits, and how they live. These are defined as living standards cartoons studies. I think I caught some lines like this in your strips.

**İzel Rozental:** I must have drawn those without realizing it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I asked İzel this question in our previous interview. “How do you draw,” I said, “What kind of technique, what method do you use?” He looked at me and said, “it pours out”. So you sketch what you live. But when we make a categorization, I see that you draw a lot on people’s living standards. I’ve categorized them all since 1991, and we can look at them later. To return to the question, there are a number of criteria that express people’s living standards in research on this topic. Like gross national product per capita. Another study conducted in 1985 evaluates people’s living standards on the assets they have, the resources they can use, and what they can do with them. In your opinion, what should be the criterion when determining people’s living standards? In other words, what do you think should be the concrete criterion for a person to live comfortably and peacefully? Should this be an economic criterion? In other words, should it be like: “this person can live comfortably at the point where the income per family falls”? Or should it be: “the resources that they can reach with a certain income and what can be done through these resources”? According to you, what is the criterion when determining living standards?

**İvo Molinas:** I am not a person with a typical Jewish community profile, and here we are talking about a profile that evaluates everything in terms of money. Utilitarianism. In other words, we are talking about a society that always makes

profit maximization, and thinks that it can benefit from everything they do. Wanting the best of everything. Maybe it's in the genes of the Jews. Now when I used the term gene, they accused me of being racist. Once I said, "Jews have it in their genes, the importance they attach to education since they read the Talmud..." An article was written about me because I used the word gene; It was said that I was racist. In other words, excessive materialism in Turkish society does not always make people happy. The standard of living may be high, but it also brings unhappiness because it is tiring to always seek the good, to go and get the best all the time... People have a certain standard, there will be a material income that will pay off. But we have to be a community that should make more intellectual maximization. Unfortunately, the Jewish community in Türkiye is not like that. I do not in that sense, embrace the typical Jewish point of view. This does not bring happiness. One should be happy in life, but here, we are talking about a community that does not know where to be happy. We are talking about a society that sees happiness only in money and the standards that money brings. This does not bring happiness. I've always been labeled "different" or "communist" because I didn't join them at that point anyway. They wanted to isolate me. But it doesn't matter, I am who I am after all. But I can't consider myself ever a socialist or communist who would say "money doesn't matter, I can live on bread and water,". This isn't my point of view.

**İzel Rozentel:** Therefore, it is a fact that a standard of living defined in terms of gross national product is not quite correct, there are other criteria as well. For me, an intellectual is also a rich person, I mean producing something is not just producing in the factory. Türkiye's biggest shortcoming is very low brain production. For example, Metin Sarfati also writes this in his articles, so we say that nothing came out of Spinoza or Bernard because he is exaggerating. But we do not agree with them either. We don't agree with anything lesser. But nothing came of it because we have become a society focused only on material things. We have denounced intellectualism with leftism, communism, or otherhood, we have not directed our youth toward these matters. What happened now? We have become a society that attaches importance to material possessions only and aims at material wealth. Let me give a simple example: I presented this at a conference at Eskişehir

Anadolu University. Unfortunately, it's like denouncing the community, but it is what it is.

**Rakel Meşulam:** I don't agree with that. When you say denouncing or whistleblowing, you mean the Turkish-Jewish community. In my opinion, the more we open ourselves up and the more we reveal, the better.

**İzel Rozental:** Of course. Currently, the Schneidertempel is an exhibition space open to the wider public, and I've been devoted to this place for twenty years. There is also an emotional aspect because I found my grandfather's and my aunt's documents, they all got married there. After doing all these works, I noticed that I enjoy spending time and effort at this venue. I want to improve it. I really work hard. We were having a quarrel with the chairman of the board of directors, whose name I will not reveal here. He told me: "İzel, why are you doing this, what is your interest? Tell me what's your financial benefit? Tell me that and let's deal with it." That was because I was always asking for money to renovate it. Twice it was in danger of destruction, but no one knows about it. I am in a constant struggle that the cabinets will be destroyed, other things will be damaged. When the president of the community said this to me, I was speechless. "Wait a minute," I said, "are we doing these things for profit?" In other words, when we volunteer in a charity organization, when we do something for the community, the benefit is the satisfaction we feel. I get it. I am satisfied too, but first I have to cleanse myself of the seven great sins. No greed, no jealousy... There are seven major sins, I have to purify myself from them.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Like jealousy, envy, gluttony...some do, some don't. In my opinion, the caste system in India is the healthiest system in the world. It's a very nice system. You do not covet the upper castes, you are happy, even if you are barefoot, you know what you will live.

**İvo Molinas:** I don't know, I haven't researched. What kind of system?

**Rakel Meşulam:** In the caste system, everyone stays in the caste they were born into and can only marry within that caste. As far as I know, that's the essence.

Therefore, we all agree that gross national income is not the only criterion, that production is extremely important based on education, and that a person's living standards can only be evaluated correctly and healthily when evaluated over this. Let's move on to another topic then. You draw a lot on Peace and War. And peace is a concept that we all question whether it will happen one day. Today, when we talk about peace, we only talk about peace at the border. We are talking about peace in the world, not in our own country or our continent.

**Ízel Rozentel:** The name of the newspaper is Peace, isn't it?

**Ívo Molinas:** The name of the newspaper is peace, and this is the common desire of all of us. Again, many researchers have conducted various studies on how peace can be achieved, and under what circumstances it be achieved, and they have determined four main criteria. Security of people, the tranquility of societies, economy, and politics. Now I want to ask you about these four criteria:

- Economy
- Policy
- Society
- Security

When we look at them, which do you think is a little more tangible for peace to be fully achieved, embraced, or focused on? For example, if economic prosperity is achieved, will it trigger peace in the country and in the world? Or one or more? For example, does peace come when politicians come to a consensus, agree on common interests, and act together? Which one can't do without the other or vice versa?

**Ízel Rozentel:** I will give only one answer. There is no peace without war.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Nice, I'm writing this too.

**Ívo Molinas:** Let me open his thoughts. I'll dig deeper, but you summed it up correctly. The world has seen two big wars. Did you know that after meeting Sigmund Freud, Einstein writes to Freud because he is also engaged in some peace

work? He takes Bertrand Russell with him so that he can be an arbitrator in these matters of war and peace. Freud says, “don’t bother, because people have two main motives: one is erotic, like eros, love, affection, and the other one is destructiveness. You cannot eliminate these two from human beings. One day one goes up, one day the other. Freud says: “Times of peace are actually recess times between wars.”

**Rakel Meşulam:** Do you see how much you agree? You are probably aware.

**İvo Molinas:** Yes. “So don’t worry about how that should be changed,” said Freud. Long psychoanalytic studies are being done, but as long as you can’t get these two things out of a person, this will always happen. People used to go hunting when they didn’t fight or kill. So, they could kill something. Because people were killing animals to satisfy their destructive instinct in their nature. When there was war, they went to war, and in peacetime, they went hunting. Anyway, the hunting issue has decreased nowadays, but the war will not be avoided. You just said that even when we come to a good place economically, there can still be war. Times of peace may be longer, but even in times of prosperity, two people can engage in power struggles with each other. It’s when power poisoning happens. One declares war on the opponent because he thinks: “I should be stronger than you,” so the economic recovery may extend the time of peace in the social sense, but the poisoning of power in those who come to power creates issues. Being strong is important, as in the case of Trump.

**Rakel Meşulam:** By the way, I’m not the only one saying this. An example is Hitler’s coming to power when Germany was in a complete economic depression. Since this kind of research has been done, this is one of them.

**İzel Rozentel:** So right now, war is the only solution. Wars become the solution. The only thing stopping the war is power.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Suppression so yes - but it’s very difficult.

**İzel Rozentel:** Yesterday we went to Quentin Tarantino’s last movie with my daughter, I don’t know if you watched it. I won’t give spoilers, but I really liked

it. Especially at the end, it turns upside down. Meanwhile, I told my daughter about the events of that period, Charles Manson and Sharon Tate, because it was an event that had a great impact on me at that time. I was very impressed with the people who were against the Vietnam War. I was more anarchist then. I am also an anarchist in a way (we could say a freshwater anarchist). But we lived in that period, and we believed in pure peace, with flower children. The day will come when everything will be all right. The 2000s will be magnificent, there will be no wars, and everyone will love each other...We had such utopian dreams, didn't we? We admired those Flower Children in some scenes, but the old hippies were against this movie. Look, they rule the world now. Look at Denise, Clinton, Obama...All these are flower children, anarchists, or rebels of the time who have come to a key point. They rule the world today. And we are shouting about climate disasters, war, etc. But in vain. Has your question been answered?

**Rakel Meşulam:** So as long as there is humanity, there will be war and peace. As you can see, we totally agree on many things, so I don't think there's much to be afraid of. I move on to the last two categories that we can identify and categorize. One of them is "foreign relations". You underline this a lot. We see that you sketch a lot on both Türkiye's relations, which we call external affairs, and the foreign relations of countries around the world. All researchers agree that the only and main principle of achieving success in foreign relations in all studies on foreign relations is to determine the target correctly. What do you think is Türkiye's goal? What was it, what happened?

**İvo Molinas:** On foreign policy?

**Rakel Meşulam:** Yes, what is the singular goal in foreign policy? You just said it was zero problems policy in Davutoğlu's time, but it turned into a zero-peaceful reality. I'm curious about your thoughts on that today.

**İvo Molinas:** I think Türkiye has no target; they get lost in aimlessness. But internalized, personalized national views have a goal — to move away from the west — in all their interventions. They cannot take it to the end because they are not very brave. The aim is to break away from the west and approach Russia.

Showing Russia as an alternative. Russia makes the same mistake, they curse Europe and America together with America, and they tolerate Russia. Because what they really want is to get away from the west. But they don't have the strength to do that either. They have neither political nor economic power. They drift away aimlessly. They get lost in aimlessness, like going back and forth between the F-35 and the S-400.

**İzel Rozentel:** I wouldn't say aimlessness. There is a target or rather, it is not a target, but to hold on to where they are, to secure their seat. In other words, it's like clutching at straws, and the easiest way for this is to win enemies. The more enemies, the more introversion. The more enemies I have, from the west or the east, the more I withdraw, and the more control I have over my people. I personally criticize Netanyahu in this regard, because this is his tactic and policy. This is also Trump's tactic.

**Ivo Molinas:** This is the target of all right-wing populists right now. So, the only goal is to secure your seat. The only solution for this is to win the war, to have more enemies. Maybe I wouldn't say war, but the threat of war. This is what I think. This is how I see it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So, the war will always exist, as we just talked about.

**İzel Rozentel:** So unfortunately, we are very reserved, and self-conscious. When I say we, I'm not talking about Şalom or the Jewish community here, I'm just saying in general. For example, if I had been an illustrator for the newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, I would not have been so interested in foreign policy. I would be bound to draw Ecevit and Demirel. One day I would draw Tayyip, I would not draw anything else. And I wouldn't be interested in the outside world at all. Unless you're interested in the outside world or when you're not interested in foreign policy, you don't see what is going on in the world. As you don't see what's going on, you can't criticize it. And then, these policies are closing in. This applies not only to illustrators but also to writers and columnists. How many writers are there who can look outside the box, see what's going on in the world, and therefore have a vision?

**İvo Molinas:** But you also need to speak a foreign language.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Sure...But everyone speaks pretty good English now.

**İvo Molinas:** Let me give an example. When I met Mustafa Sarıgül four or five years ago (he was still trying to get a municipality back then), we got on very well. One day, after a meeting, I went to him and said: “You need to open up to minorities and for this, you need to learn English.” From that day on, he cooled to me. Because he received my feedback as a challenge. But if you want to be a good president, you have to be in contact with foreign countries, as İzel said, you need to speak English. A person who does not know a foreign language cannot establish these relations in any way, that is, they remain closed. From that day on, he treated me more formally. That’s an interesting thing. Because he did not appreciate what I told him.

**İzel Rozentel:** Likewise, I am a member of the cartoonist’s association. For instance, they invite someone to a jury, but none of them speak a foreign language. They organized a symposium at Mimar Sinan University and invited 17 foreign cartoonists the other day. They made them sit down and gave a lecture in Turkish on, “What is the future of the cartoon?” One of them talked about Nasreddin Hodja for two hours. The foreign guys were lost. “İzel,” they said to me, “Please show us Istanbul, let’s see Istanbul while we’re here.” Well, that’s not all! As soon as I criticize them, they see me as their enemy. I’m still a member of the association, but it’s like I am the enemy inside. A festival was held in Ankara for 20 years, unfortunately, it doesn’t happen anymore, so I joined regularly. I made many acquaintances and friends there. We were in good relations, but I was the only one who spoke a foreign language. There would be those who could speak a smattering of English, or there were those who spoke Bulgarian and Russian, among the emigrants. There are many of them, I mean immigrants from Bulgaria working as illustrators here. They would come, and they would talk, but I established the best friendships and of course, I got rewarded for this.

**İvo Molinas:** Yes, definitely, but İzel made a correct statement. He is more famous abroad than in Türkiye. Sad but true.

**İzel Rozental:** That's what they say in France too.

**Rakel Meşulam:** So, it depends on where you look.

**İvo Molinas:** Of course, the fact that he was in Şalom was perhaps a little more effective.

**Rakel Meşulam:** It is very nice that he represents us there as a valuable artist coming out of the Turkish-Jewish community.

**İzel Rozental:** Two days ago, I met Buket Uzuner at the Moda Park. There were cameras, she was giving an interview. She saw me and said, "Come, let me introduce you. İzel Rozental is both a writer and a cartoonist." So the reporters asked: "Is that so, where do you draw?" As soon as I come across this question, I would say that I drew in Şalom, but then an explanation will have to be made: What is Şalom?

**İvo Molinas:** We think we're over it, but we're just at the beginning. Even though we are on the internet.

**İzel Rozental:** In fact, social networks are very effective. Now Şalom is much more readable and followed.

**İvo Molinas:** One of my mentors told me: "Don't forget, follow Valentina; her writings are very relevant to your subject." So, I corresponded with her, and when I mentioned İzel Rozental's cartoons, "Please say hi to him," said Valentina, "I know him very well."

**İzel Rozental:** Got it, the Italian girl. She was so kind, she published a few of my cartoons in Italy. Of course, they always point out that I drew my sketches in the Şalom newspaper. It is cited as a source. There are cartoons with headlines, they are published frequently. She also promoted and published İrvin's cartoon. There is a site called "cartoons with headlines". So, they publish mine in, if not every week quite frequently. My strip was selected "cartoon of the day" several times.

**Rakel Meşulam:** It's nice to hear these, the last category we can identify is "Corruption".

**İzel Rozentel:** It's not the last, it's actually the first category.

**Rakel Meşulam:** By “last”, I mean what comes at the end of this interview. You draw a lot about this issue. Studies on corruption describe many different types of corruption on various issues. Of course, the most prominent of these is the use of the power they call “Ground corruption” in the name of economic sanctions. That is the use of the power by the society to the authority in line with its own economic interests. Another definition is bureaucratic corruption. Here, too, the power recognized by the society, the rights granted by the authority, and the bureaucracy to become operational for their own interests, to get unearned income to their subordinates and superiors is discussed. The corruption in the legislative processes is again in the form of the rights granted to the authority by the society, the power to change the laws in line with their own interests and to redefine and enact them in a way that will benefit them. Which of these do you think is valid?

**İvo Molinas:** We think they all are, but we cannot mention them.

**İzel Rozentel:** No such thing, I've never heard of it! Where are you getting these from? You're going to cost us things that don't exist.

**İvo Molinas:** The answer to your question is obvious. We feel it, we see it, but we cannot touch it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Or we draw them in comic strips, subtly.

**İzel Rozentel:** I don't know, I've never heard of such a thing. It could be abroad.

**İvo Molinas:** God bless you İzel. Otherwise, you'll be in trouble.

**Rakel Meşulam:** It's very nice, but I still think you addressed the issue it subtly and thank you for that. Thank you so much for expressing this to us. Before I finish this interview, I must say that I had planned the time as an hour, but it's an hour and a half. Thank you very much for your time again. Now back to the question: Apart from all these categories, you also draw on very different topics. We defined them as “others” and there are different categories within them. Of course, there is, albeit a little tinkering with the community. I want to know your

next point of view. I noticed that you were in agreement on universal issues throughout the interview and that you follow a policy that will both benefit Şalom and make İzel better known. This is both İvo's point of view and İzel's choice. For the reasons he just explained... Then how do you plan to continue from now on?

**İvo Molinas:** So, regarding the community, if we see something, we have to criticize it. Constructive criticism, of course, it's nothing malicious. It can be done. We always criticize what happens in Israel, it's not an issue. But we have our red lines as Şalom. We do not compromise our red line. Maybe nowadays it's a little blurry but...

**İzel Rozental:** I think our red line is getting thicker.

**İvo Molinas:** When criticizing Israel, it's important not to strengthen the hand of the right wing or the sharia or the Palestinians or the enemies of Israel in Türkiye. This is where I've always been in trouble. I want to write the facts and I want to criticize Israel. But when I write or criticize Israel, the belief that "Well, what Israel is doing is completely wrong", which underlies the idea that "Look, even a Jew criticizes Israel!" comes to life. Actually, I never see anything as black or white. In other words, it is necessary to examine the cause-effect relationships underlying Israel's actions. But for some reason, people conclude that what Israel has done is a complete massacre without ever examining the cause-effect relations and they just close the case. There is only one culprit, and that is Israel according to them. I also claim that in 1947, with the resolution of the United Nations, it was decided to establish a Jewish state for Israel and for the Arabs to establish a state for Palestine. They established the state of Israel and have come to this day. I wonder what would have happened today if the Arabs had founded a state. So, let's go back to the very beginning. I do not say that Israel is innocent either. It is very important for a Jew to even say this word, but when you write in a Jewish newspaper that Israel is not innocent either, there are great reactions. That's where the red lines come into play, so I'm conflicted. I don't have a fixed line either.

**İzel Rozental:** Frankly, when I criticized Israel (which I criticized a lot in this 28-year period), there was never any praise from the Islamist, religious and conservative press or comments like “Wow! Look what he drew.”

**Rakel Meşulam:** You appreciated the policy, at least you didn’t criticize it.

**İzel Rozental:** Let’s not say it is appreciated...I have examples. I once drew Netanyahu and Erdogan arm in arm and wrote, “We walked together in this rain.” It appeared on the first page of Akit: “Look what did the Zionist journalist draw again!” they said. They are looking to find fault with us. On the other hand, the others (which we have just defined as the Bat Yam crowd, the Turkish Jews who have made Aliyah, and are living in Israel) behave in the opposite way. Whenever they see or think they saw criticism of Israel, they rage. Because a caricature can be sometimes misunderstood. Once I drew Father Bush wearing his boots — I had no ulterior motives. Someone said: “Wow, he drew the map of Israel on his foot. Bush is putting Israel on his feet.” Those play both sides against the middle. What kind of an imagination is that? You see, criticism comes in every way. So, when I criticize the community, I have a formula. It’s a very simple thing and a formula most cartoonists use around the world. I make the animals talk, that is, the fish. I created different species of fish. I once attended a panel in Burgazada. There was the late Hrant Dink, as well as Etyen Mahçupyan, and I undertook the task of softening the atmosphere in the panel. Vecdi Sayar had asked me to do this because they were attacking Hrant Dink a lot at that time, and I discovered the fish. You know, fish are quiet, they don’t talk, but they think. Whenever there is something about the community I wish to reveal, I immediately put the fish into action and the aquarium. I also published a book I named “the aquarium”.

**Rakel Meşulam:** Yes, you gave it to me too.

**İzel Rozental:** There are six different wars in there.

**Rakel Meşulam:** This is how it is defined in the literature. There are minor differences, but when we categorize the issues, these are left in our hands.

**İzel Rozental:** I make the fish think. While thinking, they are in contact with each other. This sometimes bothers people “Are we in the aquarium?” they react. Yes, we are in the aquarium, you and I and İvo, are all in the aquarium.

**Rakel Meşulam:** As we just talked about, we are self-conscious as a community. Therefore, you will continue to criticize related the community as you have done before. But you will do this by fine-graining, trying not to be too much of a target for the arrows of criticism.

**İvo Molinas:** İzel likes those who criticize him. He has a masochistic side. Pasteur has a saying that I love very much: “In an environment where everyone thinks the same thing; no one is thinking about anything”. That’s why if I were İzel, I would love to be criticized too, it means that someone reads this strip, thinks about it, and then comments.

**İzel Rozental:** I am not sketching in vain.

**İvo Molinas:** These are all things that take time and effort. That would make me happy, I’m sure it makes you happy too.

**İzel Rozental:** It satisfies my artistic ego. Praise rarely comes to me. Sometimes if someone really likes something I draw, they call me on the phone, but it’s so rare...But the critic arrives immediately. It means I annoyed someone. I may be mischievous, but I like it.

**Rakel Meşulam:** As with all artists. I mean, there can be no other way of being an artist...You must have an ego that is a bit above the standard, so I congratulate you and wish you good luck with your career. İvo, thank you very much too. It was very nice.

**İvo Molinas:** Tell me what you drew, what is it about?

**İzel Rozental:** So, I drew a portrait.

**İvo Molinas:** I hope it is not the portrait of Tayyip. Look, beware!

**İzel Rozental:** It’s not finished yet.

**INTERVIEW WITH IZEL ROZENTAL, January 21, 2022**

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** There is a reason why I wanted to get together with you once again. As of next semester, I'll be starting the last term of the period allocated to me for the thesis that I am conducting at Bilgi University, Social Sciences Institute, Faculty of Communication. There is a scope that I have built up so far, and in this context, I claim that Şalom newspaper has changed its discourse from 1947 to this day — more precisely until 2016 because my thesis ends in 2016 — but there is one thing that has not changed: aside from keeping up with the political, diplomatic and cultural agenda of Turkey and of the world, there is also an appeal to peace that they've always set forth. This is a discourse that reflects that we can live together in peace. Şalom carries this out through comic strips, and they do it with İzel Rozental's cartoons. In this sense, İzel Rozental creates a positive resistance over Şalom newspaper. By positive resistance, I mean, regardless of the political or diplomatic agenda — I repeat — Şalom reflects the statement that we can live together in peace through the comic strips of İzel Rozental, and therefore shows resistance to all kinds of people, institutions and organizations who seem to be supporting this idea but are actually against it. The reason of this definition is an argument in my thesis that states: "He reveals this in a positive way without resorting to any violence." On Tuesday, January 18, we met with my advisor and the entire committee to generate a follow-up. During this follow-up session, I was asked some questions about this argument, so I wanted to meet with you once again. That's the main reason. From here, I would like to proceed with my questions, but if you have any other comments on this, I would like to listen to you first.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** I don't have any comments for now. The part you said you've read, and actually I'm guessing that you have

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** I have —

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Well, the thesis you are describing, I mean comic strips are first of all an element of discussion, I basically bring out things that I do not agree with, that I oppose to, and I reflect them to the reader with cartoons, and by adding a little humor. This is what I do. Of course, I will pick the peaceful path. Of course, I will not fight against anyone. Because the moment you start fighting,

you come across a dichotomy, and complete duality rises. Whereas, what I want to do is — you know I've always had a mind of my own, I mean except for some cases, I am not interested on the headline, or what's in the newspaper. I follow the world agenda and of course I try to create a discussion with my cartoons for a peaceful and serene world. And you peacefully commented in this manner, and I have no objection to that, what you say is correct.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** I must say that the term positive resistance, is a concept introduced by Renan KOEN. It was a concept that Renan KOEN came up with, in relation with the themes and musical works of the composers who were captured in the concentration camps during World War II. I wanted to analyze how this concept was reflected in Şalom and I saw that it was indeed applied. From this statement of yours...

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Well, I'm going to ask you a question. Of course, while doing this, you also analyzed Şalom. That is a 59-year process from 1947 until 2016; I believe you read the articles of all the writers, as well as the editors of Şalom.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Yes. Didn't you sense the same stance in them, I mean was there something different about them? Did you feel a different attitude?

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Şalom reveals this positive resistance in general. But I have examined the newspaper in four different categories, as you said I divided a period of almost 60 years into four. I noticed that the first period from 1947 to 1992, was built around an introverted society.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Right — from 1992 until 2003, with the establishment of the 19<sup>th</sup> Year Foundation in 1992, I realized that it was a period that put an emphasis on Turkish citizenship. This period comes to an end with the terror attack at Neve Şalom Synagogue in 2003. I interpreted the period between 2003 and 2010, that is, when the Mavi Marmara incident occurred, as the 'under scrutiny' era. Unlike the period when they put an emphasis on Turkish citizenship, I noticed that this was a period when they were looking for an answer to their question: "Are we

really safe on this land?” I saw that there was a period when they were looking for an answer to their question. Between 2010 and 2016, I noted that they came up with a completely different style from previous periods, emphasizing this time the Turkish-Jewish identity. With these changing discourses, I noticed that writers on the front page of the newspaper were in close proximity, in parallel thought or in simultaneous action accommodating this style. However, in your cartoons, I saw very clearly what you stated as: “You know me, I don’t care much about what’s on the front page,” attitude. And I found this positive resistance in your comic strips. A resistance to the agenda. And since 1991, Şalom newspaper has been part of this positive resistance regardless of the agenda, by publishing the strips you named “The End of the Tunnel” on their front page, on the very same spot, with the same dimensions. I don’t know if was able to answer your question.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Yes, it was the answer to my question, it was very nicely stated, and actually it was something I had not thought of. Thank you.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** So actually, working on your cartoons taught me a lot. First of all, I got to know you better. I saw how subtly you were making your slight touches. That’s why it was a very nice process, I would like to thank you for this.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** I thank you. From here, I move on to my next question. I had the chance to talk to you twice: once with İvo Molinas and once privately. In fact, my records show that we’ve privately talked twice. I have some questions at this point, also parallel and related to this. In one of your statements, you mentioned something like: “If I were drawing cartoons for the Cumhuriyet newspaper, I would not be able to act with such freedom.” You also said: “Şalom has provided me with such ease.” Therefore, when associated with this positive resistance, can we say that the fact that you are drawing in Şalom newspaper is a way for you to reveal this positive resistance? What do you think?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** We can definitely say that. Consciously or unconsciously? I can’t say. Maybe there is a question mark here, but they were definitely supportive. I have noticed their great support in demonstrating this

positive resistance. I have always seen it from the very first day. There were times when I was depressed after being attacked by certain people from various circles. I think we have already talked about this with you. The editorial staff always supported me, they backed me up and sometimes they even hid some aggressive attacks from me, just for the sake of supporting me. I found it out later on.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** This is great. As you said, we have already discussed these before, but I wanted to underline it once again in connection with this resistance issue. As you said, you draw in other media too, and these media are mentioned on your website. For instance, you have comic strips in *Gül Diken Magazine*, Turkey European website or *Diyojen* periodical. What do you think about these media, in parallel to this. Because you described yourself as an anarchist in one of your interviews. When I asked how you would describe yourself, you said “I am an anarchist”. Were you able to draw your strips from the freedom perspective that *Şalom* gave you, or did you draw them only in media you could witness this freedom? If not, what did you do? I’m curious about that.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Well, of course, every medium has its own readers and policy, in other words, they have a publishing policy. First of all, as soon as I decide to submit my cartoon to a medium, we have to be on the same page in order for it to be published. Their readers, their profile must be a in line with my profile, that’s the first condition. The second condition is their publication policy. I used to draw for a magazine called *Yumuşak G* too, whether it be *Gül Diken* or *Diyojen* or some other magazines for which I draw cartoons, their teams consist of people with whom I have more or less the same opinion, with whom I can share the same stance, and whose minds are practically working the same way. Therefore, when I drew there, I expressed my thoughts in the same way, but for example, I follow the agenda a little bit more in *Şalom*. So it’s more current. After all, it’s a weekly publication.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** after all, you draw an editorial cartoon —

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Of course, I draw editorial strips in *Şalom*. Whereas, in other media I let myself free, and focus more on psychological or philosophical

(I think this was too pretentious) and on social issues (this was simpler). I can say that I focus on social issues, and in a way open our thoughts to discussion.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Cool. By the way, I define your exhibitions and your published books as another medium where you let yourself free. I think you draw more easily there.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** I mean, I don't draw specially for my books. I put my drawings together in books and publish them. It happens periodically. We used to do it every two-three year, at the beginning, then we extended this period because they were not sold much, they are not in very high demand. Frankly, I do not want to forcefully sell books to my friends or relatives. It would be wasteful and unnecessary to publish a book, at a time when paper price has increased so much. But it makes me happy of course, every book is a new birth for me. That was for my books. Regarding personal exhibitions, again I do not draw any cartoons for my exhibitions. I'm displaying what I've already drawn. We can say it's for those who did not see them before, for those who want to see them all at once, or to simply satisfy my soul. But other than that, I get invitations to lots of group exhibitions, and these are concept exhibitions. They're generally focused on problems that the world is suffering from, like climate crisis, population explosion (maybe this is obsolete by now), wars, hunger, women's rights, human rights and so on. I also receive invitations on these themes, from exhibitions held here and abroad. Those held abroad are usually accompanied by panel discussions, so one should get prepared, and write a speech before attending them. I participate to these and sometimes I draw special cartoons for them. But I also put them to good use and have them published in Şalom when the day comes, I sometimes update them with a few minor changes, but the day always comes. After all, we are living the same things over and over again, like a vicious circle. I've been drawing for more than 30 years, and believe me, I did not come across one single topic for which I didn't say, "I remember drawing this before." There you go...

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** First of all, I don't think anyone buys your books unwillingly. You said, "I can't think of forcefully selling books to my friends or

relatives.” As one of your friends, I constantly thumb through your books and look at your cartoons with great pleasure.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Thank you, if you continue like this a little longer, I will get better. Go on.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Maybe you will see more in the future, that these are my sincere feelings, especially if I complete my thesis, you will see then. Well, I want to go back to the exhibitions. In the exhibitions you attend, do you also follow the same principle that you have just mentioned, i.e., “I make sure that the editorial policy of the magazines I draw for are in line with my point of view?” I think that’s what you said. Also, for the exhibitions — I am talking about the exhibitions you are invited to — do you have a similar attitude? Are you selective in that matter or do you want to be present in all kinds of exhibitions and present your personal point of view?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** There is no such thing as “all kinds of exhibitions”. If someone tells me that they are organizing an exhibition about the Holocaust, just like some people did it in Iran. I would not participate. Or if the topic is anti-vaccination which I disagree with, or an exhibition organized by climate crisis deniers, I would never attend, even if I am cordially invited. Those are opposite poles. Even if I participated, they would never publish or display the work I would send because it won’t serve their purpose. We would have adverse opinions. Therefore, the theme of the exhibitions that I am invited to are generally some world issues on which we’ve formed a consensus. Sometimes it is free format. For example, they say they’ve invited 10 Turkish cartoonists, or I attend an exhibition in France with 3-4 of my works. Then, I can choose among universal issues, for example climate crisis or so, and I send 3-4 strips and they are displayed. I don’t know if I could answer your question?

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** That was a great answer. You say that if it fits your point of view — I do not want to say if it’s parallel, but if you are on the same page with it — then you decide to join an event. You believe that, if it’s an event with a different perspective, they would not display the cartoon you send them. I take that

from what you just told me. So — this is a topic that came up during the previous interview — why did you name your column “The End of the Tunnel”? I have written 300 pages, but I never thought of questioning “The End of the Tunnel” because I think it is a self-introduction phrase. But I still believe that it would be nicer to hear it from you. Why The End of the Tunnel?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** The End of the Tunnel is actually a bit of a pretentious name. Too pretentious indeed. When I first started to draw, my comic strips in Şalom newspaper were entitled İzelden. — **RAKEL:** I remember that the font resembled your handwriting — actually it was not, they had made it themselves. They came up with this idea and published it like that. Then I published my first book, that I named 91, but I didn’t have any pretensions about this book. I had held an exhibition in order to display all the work I had done during the past year to a broader audience, and Gözlem Press had this book published as the catalog of the exhibition. They had already covered the cost. (22.min) Some friends who came to the exhibition, told me that I needed to find a proper name. They said: “You have to publish your comic strips with an alias, your column cannot be named after your own name, and your signature, and so on and so forth.” I remember that my friend Aykut Köksal who is an architect, told me: “Let’s name it The End of the Tunnel”. It sounded super pretentious to me, and when I shared this thought with my friends, they said: “Let it be pretentious, you be pretentious too, why will you show such humility?” That’s exactly how it happened. I’m still thinking if this name is in line with what I’m drawing but with time I got used to it, and I guess the reader seems to have gotten used to it, so has everybody at the newspaper.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Why do you think it’s pretentious?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** There is a claim in it, you speak of the end of the tunnel, that is, you show a way out of the darkness.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** You show a way out of a darkness. I will use this. So you think we are in the darkness, but you still think there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** You can't live otherwise. I mean, we have been living in darkness for years, for decades, we have always been living in the darkness, but somehow, we are hopeful, and we must not lose hope. To be honest, I was more hopeful in the 70s; I started to lose that hope day by day after the 80s. I am not talking about Turkey alone, I am talking about the entire world. I mean politics, dense housing, everything...I really have many reasons, lots of indications to lose hope. Therefore, we are moving forward in the darkness, but we have to see a light. We have to see a ray of hope, or we can't proceed. Otherwise, life ends, right?

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** It's true that relatively our hope has diminished, but let's wait for the times when it will rise again. I actually see the positive resistance that I mentioned at the beginning of our talk, in the title *The End of the Tunnel*. When I interpret it independently of your description, it seems you actually show a resistance to darkness. You shine a light in the darkness, maybe it's a light at the far end, but it's still a light. Even if you lose hope, you still shine a light. On the other hand, before asking you why you chose *The End of the Tunnel*, I was convinced that you illuminate the darkness, that is, you illuminate the topics that remain in the dark. For instance, you shed light on people who seem to be antiwar in a conflict zone, but who sell weapons to both parties, who discreetly trigger the war. Therefore, I am hopeful that this light will bring brightness. Yes, it symbolizes the light at the end of the tunnel, but...

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** This is not brightness, it's a flashlight. What you mean is, me holding a flashlight into the dark. If I said a projector, it would be too pretentious. I'm trying to hold a flashlight. You are right, let's not say that those are the headlights of a train getting into the tunnel, but the term 'flashlight' is a better fit for such cases.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** At one point, what you describe as a flashlight — but I still consider it to be the beginning of an illumination — actually reverberates what's not visible through the darkness. Therefore, while analyzing your cartoons, I interpreted them in two ways. Who did you use to define what I call a "descriptor", like what they are saying to each other? What is the story there? If you see it as an

iceberg when we cross a threshold, which I later define as the analytical plane, the metaphors you use when you dive under the iceberg, the interpretation you make based on these metaphors. In fact, I have proposed a method for a brand-new reality with the light you hold while crossing that threshold. That's why I considered The End of the Tunnel as a journey, an enlightenment, the emergence of a new reality.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Possibly. Let's call it the light to come. Not that has arrived, but the prospective light.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** I have something to share. While writing my thesis, I have internalized it over the years, so it is sometimes difficult or incomplete to evaluate it from a more objective perspective, independent of my own identity. Then I realized why I've never questioned it, when my advisor asked me why The End of the Tunnel; I actually knew it deep inside. But I wanted to ask it to you, just for the sake of hearing it from you. I also would like to talk about your articles. You write in Şalom, and I read your articles because your point of view there is similar to your drawings. I think they tend to shed a light on hope and darkness... or, let's not say, simultaneously on darkness. The articles that I read and look on. What do you think?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Well, I write as I feel like. I can't really say something as this is your own comment. I just write as I feel like, this is my style. I try not to mix politics in my articles as much as possible, unlike my cartoons. My cartoons may be harsher from time to time, or rather more direct and straight. Or there may be tough cartoons, which firmly hide the joke. In my articles, I try to feature humor a bit more. When I say humor, I am not talking about absurd humor. In a way, I'm trying to make more subtle humor, which I would say is my style.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Therefore, I see that you are actually differentiating your articles from your cartoons.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** That's correct — But what they have in common is that you put forth your gut instincts. I'd asked you a question about your technique: "What kind of a technique do you use?" and you'd answered: "I write as I feel like."

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** It's my mind, my hand, I let them do the job. They all come from the same mind, using the same hand as a tool. It's true...I write and draw as I feel like.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** And we look on your heart's content with great a pleasure. Thank you for the interview. The recording will end in 5 minutes, I wanted to conclude before it ends.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** You had asked me about some books on Jewish cartoonists. — **RAKEL:** yes, you are right

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** What was it, can you remind me again?

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** My advisor has shared a couple of books with me, the main topics are "Jews" and "cartoons". He had shared books on both how Jews use humor in general, and how Jewish characters are mentioned and involved in humor. I remember you'd said, "Yes, I keep a tab on some books and there are books that inspire me." Is it possible for you to share some of these books? This was what I had asked you for. And some of the magazines that you have drawn that are no longer published, like Gül Diken, for instance?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** None of them are published anymore. Tough luck. Every time I start drawing for one, that magazine is discontinued.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Şalom newspaper has been published since 1947, and you are with them since 1991.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Except for Şalom.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Also, do you happen to have the old issues?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Of course, I have all of them in my archive.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Can you share them with me?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** How will I share them?

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** I can borrow them from you and return them after I get copies. Can we do that?

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** Well, if you are going to return them, because every copy is unique.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** I saw that they were sold in shopping sites like Gittigidiyor, n11, Hepsiburada and so on.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** It's okay, it doesn't matter, you can get them from me.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Okay, first you take care and get better, I will call you next week. It looks like we'll see each other a few more times. I hope that I call you soon to announce that I finally got my PhD.

**İZEL ROZENTAL:** I am eagerly awaiting reading your thesis.

**RAKEL MEŞULAM:** Well, I'm also looking forward to seeing my thesis in print. I will definitely share it with you. Thank you very much. I'm ending the recording. Hope to see you again.

## **APPENDIX 2: A LIST OF İZEL ROZENTAL'S WORK**

### **Collections of Izel Rozental's Cartoons:**

1991 – İzel / Gözlem Gazetecilik Basın ve Yayın AŞ. (1991, İstanbul)

Herşeye Rağmen / Gözlem Gazetecilik Basın ve Yayın AŞ. (September 1993, İstanbul)

Peki ama neden? / Gözlem Gazetecilik Basın ve Yayın AŞ. (1996, İstanbul)

Non-Comics! / İzel Rozental (April 1999, İstanbul)

The Joy of Bridge-Elena Jeronimidis / Bridge Plus (2000, İngiltere)

Ne Olacak Bu Dünyanın Hali? / Gözlem Basın ve Yayın AŞ. (February 2001, İstanbul)

Akvaryum / Gözlem Basın ve Yayın AŞ. (September 2008, İstanbul)

### **Books**

Dikkat! Buda / Okuyan Us Yayın (September 2004, İstanbul)

Yol Boyunca... / Remzi Kitabevi (July 2000, İstanbul)

F (MizahYazıları) / Okuyan Us Yayın (September 2002, İstanbul)

B (MizahYazıları) / Okuyan Us Yayın (March 2003, İstanbul)

Moda Sevgilim / Heyamola Yayınları (September 2009, İstanbul)

### **Media**

Açık Site, Açık Radyo (blog)

Turquie Européenne (<http://www.turquieeuropeenne.eu/>) Fransa

M5 Haber Dergisi

Diyojen Mizah Dergisi

Güldiken Mizah Kültürü Dergisi

Bridge Plus (İngiltere)

ACBL Bulletin (A.B.D.)

Le Bridgeur (Fransa)

Briç Dünyası Dergisi

Yeni Akrep Uluslararası Mizah Dergisi (<http://yeniakrep.kktc.net>) (KKTC)

Göztepe Kültür Dergisi

Anatolia News (Japonya)

Frekans Dergisi

### **Activities and Appearances**

Karikatür ve İnsan / 1. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Kataloğu,  
1995

Karikatür ve İletişim / 2. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Kataloğu,  
1996

Sanatta Karikatür / 3. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Katalođu,  
1997

Karikatür ve Kùltür / 4. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Katalođu,  
1998

Karikatür ve Felsefe / 5. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Katalođu,  
1999

Yirminci Yüzyılın Karikatürü / 6. Uluslararası Ank. Karikatür Festivali Kat.  
2000

Karikatür ve Siyaset / 7. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Katalođu,  
2001

Karikatür ve Bilişim / 8. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Katalođu,  
2002

Karikatür Sosyoloji ve İnsan Hakları / 9. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür  
Festivali Katalođu, 2003

Karikatür ve Mizah / 10. Uluslararası Ankara Karikatür Festivali Katalođu,  
2004

Ayrımcılık (Uluslararası Karikatür Sergisi Katalođu) (1997), (Editör ve  
çizer)

Ağzımda Kül (Örgeyazım) (1998), Beki Bardavid (Çizim)

Yeni Bin yılın Eşiğinde İnançlar (1999) (Editör ve çizer)

Yüksek kaldırımda 100 Yıllık Bir Sinagog (2002) (Çizim)

Kahramanlar Kitabı (2004), Öykü – Editörler Cem Mumcu - N. Nevra  
Savcılıođlu

Soytarı Gülmez, Sırtır (2004), Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay (Çizim)

“Uzun İnce Bir Yol” Karikatürlerle Türkiye-AB İlişkileri (Tarih Vakfı)  
2012

### **Exhibitions**

İzel/1991 – Gözlem Sanat Galerisi, Teşvikiye/İstanbul, Aralık 1991

Herşeye Rağmen – Karikatür ve Mizah Müzesi, Fatih/İstanbul, Kasım 1993

Herşeye Rağmen – Caporal Evi, Kadıköy/İstanbul, Ocak 1994

Non-Comics! – Landeck/Avusturya, Mart 2001

50+10=30 Karikolaj – Gözlem Sanat Galerisi, Teşvikiye/İstanbul, Nisan 2001

Karikolaj – Ankara Karikatür Festivali, Resim ve Heykel Müzesi/Ankara, Mayıs 2001

Briç Karikatürleri Sergisi – Manisa Briç Kulübü, Manisa, Haziran 2001

Briç Karikatürleri Sergisi – Moda Deniz Kulübü, İstanbul, Aralık 2002

RIDEP 2003 – Carquefou, Nantes/Fransa, Ocak 2003

Non-Politics! – Tel-Aviv/İsrail, Eylül 2003

Akvaryum – Schneidertempel Sanat Merkezi, Kasım 2009

Non-Politics! – Milas Belediyesi Hacıalığa Konağı Turhan Selçuk Karikatürlü Ev, Haziran 2011

The Finest International Political Cartoons of the Year 1994 / A.B.D., 1995

The Dutch Cartoon Festival / Amsterdam, Hollanda, 1997

Ayrımcılık / Uluslararası Karikatür Sergisi, Ortaköy Kültür Merkezi, İstanbul, 1998

Discrimination / Belçika, Slovakya, 1998 – 1999

The Great Challenge / Londra, 1998

For Peace/Barişİçin / Karikatürcüler Derneği, İstanbul, 1998

Hey Turkey! / Berlin, Hamburg, Köln – Almanya, 1999

Bizi Nasıl Görüyorlar? / Tokyo, Fukuoka, Hirosaki – Japonya, 1999

İnançlar – Uluslararası Karikatür Sergisi/ Schneidertempel Sanat Merkezi,  
İstanbul, 1999

Eğitim – Uluslararası Karikatür Sergisi / Anadolu Üniversitesi, Eskişehir,  
2000

Doğu Batı – Uluslararası Karikatür Sergisi / Schneidertempel Sanat  
Merkezi, İstanbul, 2000

Deventer Coek& Turkish Coffee / Deventer, Hollanda, 2001

Femmes Afghanes / Carquefou, Fransa, Ocak 2002

Chips & Turkish Delight / Ayr, İskoçya, Ekim 2002

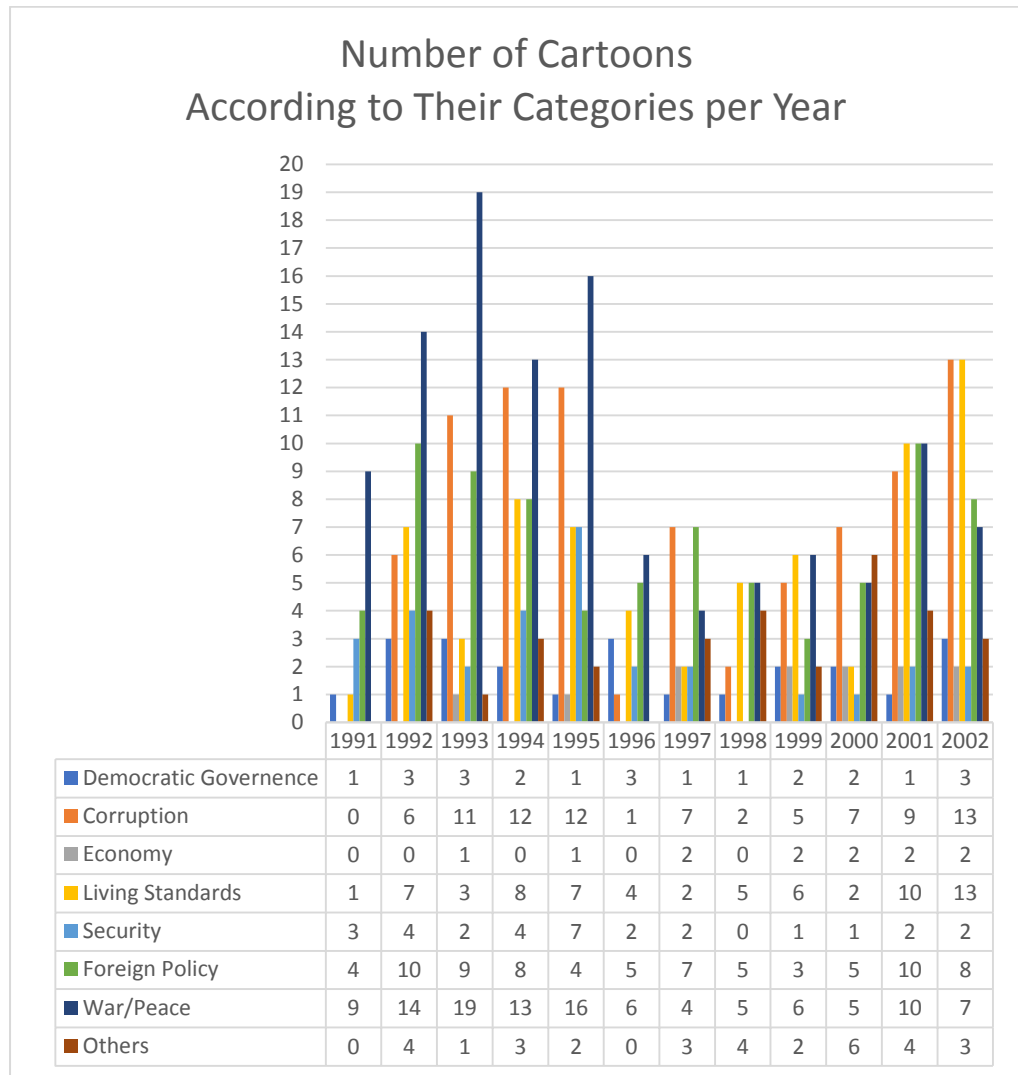
The Eye of Turkey, The Eye of Japan, Hirosaki & Tokyo / Japonya, Eylül-  
Ekim 2003

The Jerusalem Cartoon Conference, Kudüs - İsrail, Kasım 2005

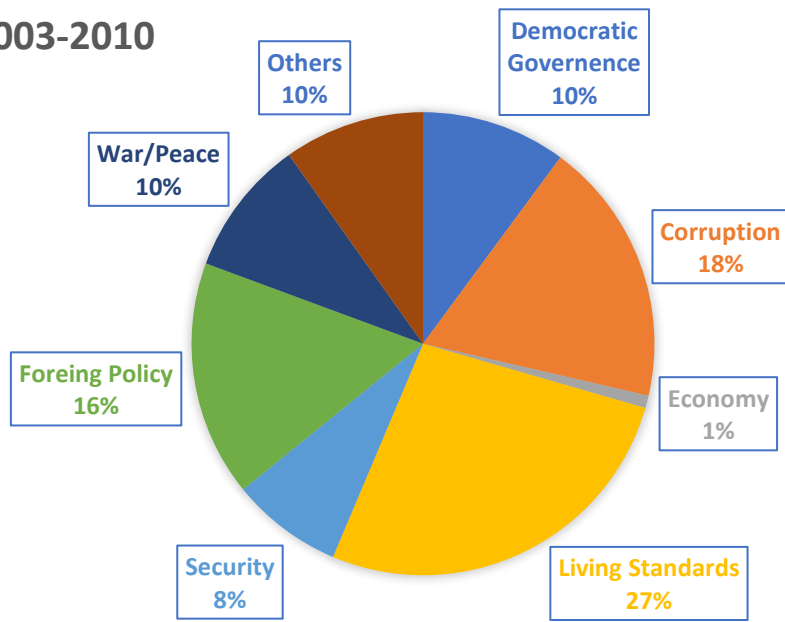
Welcome Turkey! Muzeum Karykatury, Varşova – Polonya, Kasım 2005 -  
Ocak 2006

“Uzun İnce Bir Yol” Karikatürlerle Türkiye-AB İlişkileri,  
İstanbul/Brüksel/Paris, Eylül-Aralık 2012

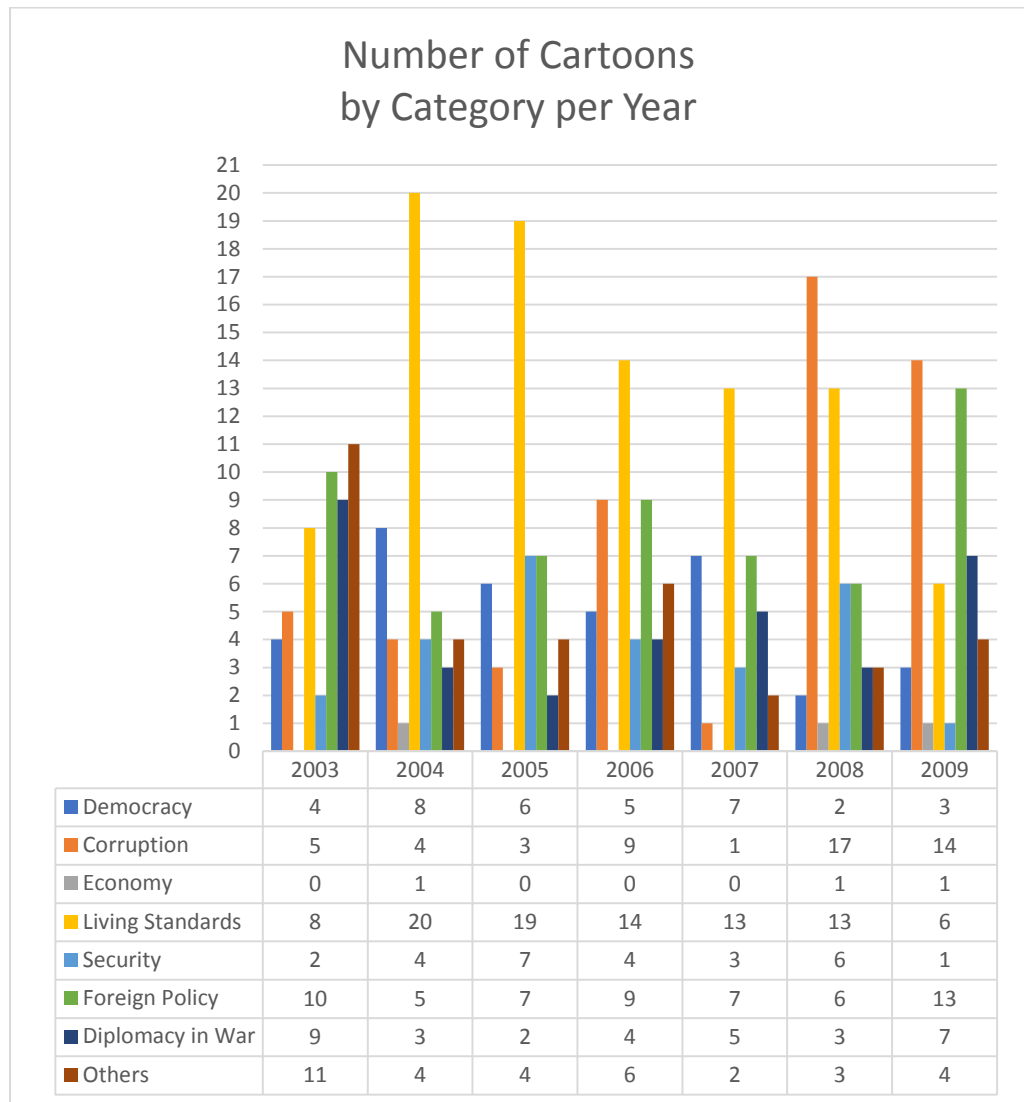
**APPENDIX 3: GRAPHS OF FRONT-COVER CARTOONS**



2003-2010



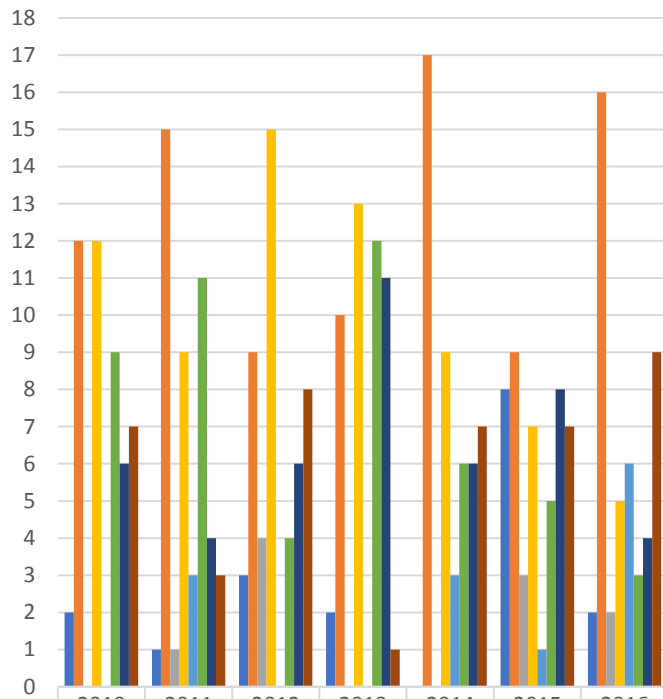
## Number of Cartoons by Category per Year



### **Cartoons Report 2010-2016**

\*336 entries

## Number of Cartoons by Category per Year



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
■ Democratic Governance	2	1	3	2	0	8	2
■ Corruption	12	15	9	10	17	9	16
■ Economy	0	1	4	0	0	3	2
■ Living Standards	12	9	15	13	9	7	5
■ Security	0	3	0	0	3	1	6
■ Foreign Policy	9	11	4	12	6	5	3
■ War/Peace	6	4	6	11	6	8	4
■ Others	7	3	8	1	7	7	9